

## F E B R U A R Y   C L U B   M E E T I N G

### When & Where

- Date:** [Friday, February 27th, 2015](#)
- Time:** Socializing at 7PM  
Meeting starts at 7:30PM  
*Guests are welcome to join us!*
- Place:** Covington School - Gymnasium  
205 Covington Rd, Los Altos, CA  
*(near Foothill Expressway and El Monte Rd)*
- Snacks:** Cookies and coffee will be served
- Post-Meeting:** Denny's on Mathilda in Sunnyvale

### Who & What

**Presentation:**

**CW Skimmer and the  
Reverse Beacon Network:**

**What it can do for you  
even if you never operate CW**

**Speaker:**  
Bob Wilson N6TV

*Details on page 3*



### Raffle Prizes

We will have a great selection of Raffle Prizes as well as the CASH Wish-You-Were-Here Prize.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Prize:** Kenwood TM-281A 2M 65W Transceiver with WX Alert
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize:** Diamond NR-770HB 2M-440 Antenna High Power High Performance Mobile Whip plus MFJ-335BS HIFLUX Mag Mount
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize:** MFJ-281 Clear Tone Speaker
- 4<sup>th</sup> Prize:** NARCC 2014 NorCal Repeater Directory



### It's that time of year!

## *FARS Membership Renewals*

Renewing your membership to FARS provides much needed support for your club activities.

Thank you and 73.

**Wish-You-Were-Here Prize:** A **CASH** prize awarded to a member who is present and has paid their 2015 dues.

# CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

[www.fars.k6ya.org/events/calendar](http://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.*

## FEBRUARY

- 27** **FARS Club Meeting**, Covington School, Los Altos, CA, 7PM  
**CW Skimmer and the Reverse Beacon Network**  
Speaker Bob N6TV

## MARCH

- 7 **Radio Fest 2015**, 8AM-4PM  
Monterey Moose Family Center, 555 Canyon Del Rey,  
Del Rey Oaks, CA 93940 (Monterey)  
*Vendor booths, speakers, indoor and outdoor swap meet, prizes*
- 8 **BARC Meeting**, Panera Bread, Cupertino, 3PM  
*Bay Area Radio Builders Club. Sponsored by FARS.*  
*See the website / Yahoo Group for details.*
- 11 Board Meeting, Los Altos, CA, 7:30PM
- 14** **Electonics Flea Market**, De Anza College, Cupertino, 5AM  
**SPONSORED BY FARS – SAVE THE DATE**  
**Volunteers will help make this fundraiser a success!**
- 27** **FARS Club Meeting**, Covington School, Los Altos, CA, 7PM

## APRIL

- 8 Board Meeting, Los Altos, CA, 7:30PM
- 11 **Electonics Flea Market**, De Anza College, Cupertino, 5AM
- 12 **BARC Meeting**, Panera Bread, Cupertino, 3PM  
*Bay Area Radio Builders Club. Sponsored by FARS.*  
*See the website / Yahoo Group for details.*
- 19 **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 2015, 2014 or 2013*
- 24** **FARS Club Meeting**, Covington School, Los Altos, CA, 7PM
- 24-26 **Henry Coe State Park Backcountry Weekend**  
*Volunteer amateur radio operators wanted to support this event*

## UPCOMING

- 4/17 **66<sup>th</sup> International DX Convention**, Visalia, CA  
*Forums, exhibits, banquet, prizes & more!*
- 6/28** **Field Day 2015**  
*Come join FARS for this on-the-air event!*
- 10/3 **California QSO Party**, aka “CQP” - *Fun on the air!*
- 10/17 **Pacificon 2015** - *Forums, exhibits, banquet & more!*

## ***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](mailto:K6YL@ARRL.net)

# PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Mikel KN6QI

**Membership Meeting.** Our next membership meeting is scheduled for February 28th and our talk is “CW Skimmer and the Reverse Beacon Network: What It Can Do for You Even If You Never Operate CW” with Bob Wilson (aka “TV Bob”) N6TV. Bob talks about a system for reporting “real-time” HF propagation, not through prediction, but actual measurement of HF propagation.



See the

**Electronics Flea Market March 14 – Volunteers needed.** The first Electronics Flea Market of 2015 is scheduled for March 14th, and this one is sponsored by FARS. We need at least a dozen volunteers to operate this fundraising activity and I currently have about four. Most of the help required is to run the concession stand during the morning in segments (5am-8pm, 7am-11am, and 10am-1pm). I just need your contact information and time slot and you just need to show up on time.

Some additional volunteers are needed to help with loading the equipment on Friday afternoon, and returning it on Saturday after the market. The equipment is now stored near De Anza college, so the transport trips are much shorter and quicker. We need someone to order and pick up donuts for the concession stand. Please contact me at kn6qi at arrl.net or via the FARS web site membership roster.

**FARS / PAARA Winter Banquet 2015.** Thank you to everyone who attended last month’s banquet. The event was a big success and we all had good time. I want to thank PAARA and Kristen McIntyre K6WX for joining us for this event and organizing our speaker. I want to thank the following for their help running this event: Richard Baldwinson N6ATD (raffle rizes), Doña Kerns KI6DAR (sign-ins), Marty Wayne W6NEV (sign-ins), Joy Stearns KQ6SVO (raffle ticket sales), Bob Bynum WB2URF (raffle ticket sales), Darryl Presley KI6LDM (raffle prizes), Paul Zander, AA6PZ (raffle prizes), and Joanna K6YL (raffle ticket sales and photos). My apologies if I have neglected to mention anyone else who helped. Thanks to Michael’s at Shoreline for the great job they do every year.

**Support FARS with membership.** Membership dues are our main source of support, helping FARS put on programs and other activities. Membership is only \$20 (\$10 youth rate for applicants under 18) for the year. 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 KN6QI

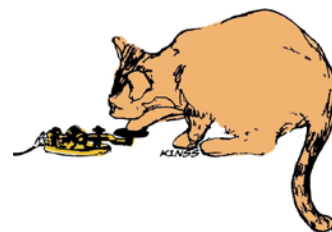
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## FEBRUARY MEETING

### CW Skimmer and the Reverse Beacon Network: What it can do for you even if you never operate CW

Bob Wilson N6TV (aka “TV Bob”) explains CW Skimmer and the Reverse Beacon Network. These two elements work together to provide real time monitoring and reporting of HF propagation path openings. The resulting database represents real time “nowcasting” as opposed to “climatological” propagation predictions like VOACAP gives. Hence the data is useful to operators as opposed to communication planners.

About the speaker: Bob Wilson N6TV is an active CW contester and Win-Test logging software supporter. Licensed for over 40 years, Bob competed at the World Radiosport Team Championship (WRTC) in San Francisco (1996), Slovenia (2000), and Moscow (2010).



# WINTER BANQUET 2015

with the  
Foothills Amateur Radio Society  
and the  
Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association



Thank you to everyone who attended this year's banquet. And congratulations to all of the prize winners!

Located at Michael's at Shoreline in Mountain View,  
the restaurant provided a great location for the dinner and presentation.



# WINTER BANQUET 2015

continued

## Rich KE1B's Presentation at January's Banquet:

### “Plan, Organize and Enjoy a DXpedition”



Rich (KE1B) and Anna (W6NN) have raised Holiday DXpeditioning to an art form. Over the past 4 years they have traveled to numerous destinations in the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, and coastal Africa in search of fine food, great beaches, and massive pileups. Rich explained the logistics involved in arranging their excursions, and provided a detailed look into his "DXpedition-in-a-Box" portable station. Combining lots of photographs from their travels, stories of their adventures in searching for exotic cuisine and fun, and insight into working the pileups from "the other side", this talk showed a fun way to enjoy our hobby. Perhaps he even encouraged you to venture out on your own DXpedition!

### Rich KE1B's Holiday DXpeditions include:

#### PJ2/KE1B (2011)

##### **Curacao**

*An island in the southern Caribbean Sea, on the continental shelf of South America*

#### VP5/KE1B (2012)

##### **Turks & Caicos Islands**

*Islands in the North Atlantic Ocean, southeast of the Bahamas*

#### VP2EAQ (2013)

##### **Anguilla**

*An island in the Caribbean Sea, east of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands*

#### EA8/KE1B (2013)

##### **Tenerife**

*An island located off the southwest coast of mainland Morocco, within the Canary Islands*

#### 9H3MMM (2013)

##### **Malta**

*An island in the Mediterranean Sea, south of Sicily*

#### V25M (2014)

##### **Antigua**

*An island in the West Indies, south Caribbean Sea*





# WINTER BANQUET 2015 continued



## RAFFLE PRIZES & WINNERS

**\*GRAND PRIZE\***  
Elecraft KX-3 HF Transceiver  
**Josh K6JSH**



MFJ-260C 300W Dry Dummy Load  
**Darrell KI6LDM**



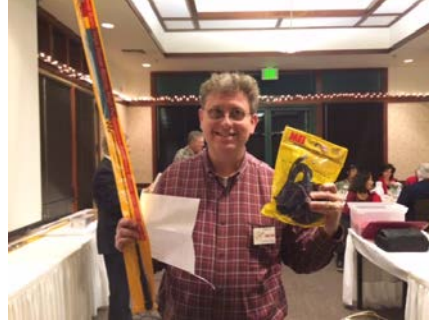
Kenwood TM-281A 2M Transceiver  
**Bill K6VWO**



C Crane WiFi Internet Radio  
**Josh K6JSH**



Diamond NR-770HB 2m/440 Mobile Antenna w/MFJ-335BS Mag Mount  
**Darrell KI6LDM**



Ferrite Chokes  
**Steve K6OIK**



West Mountain RIGblaster Plug & Play  
**Karen KK6NGA**



BaoFeng BF-F8+ Dual Band VHF/UHF HT  
**Donia KI6DAR**



Daiwa CS-201 Antenna Coax Switch  
**Dave K6WA**



Diamond X50A Base Vertical Antenna  
**Dave K6WA**



West Mountain Radio COM Speakers  
**Frank AF6XX**



La Crosse Digital Atomic Clock  
**Patricia KG6HRJ**





# WINTER BANQUET 2015 continued



PL-259 Connectors  
**Frank AF6XX**



50-ohm Jumper Cable  
**Rick N6DQ**



RG8 Jumper Cable  
**Byron N6UOB**



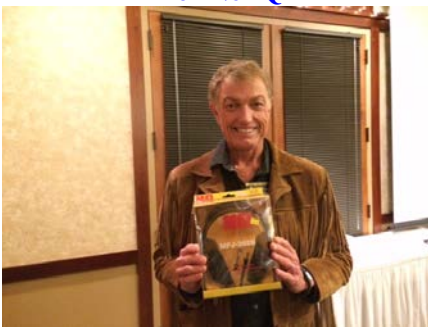
Remote Weather Station  
**Josh K6JSH**



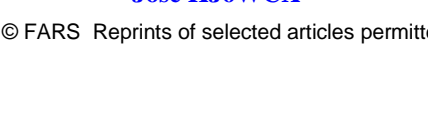
Remote Weather Station  
**Howard W6HOC**



MFJ-392B Headphones  
**Rick N6DQ**



PL-259 Connectors  
**Jose KJ6WCX**



**\$1600  
in prizes!**



# ELECTRONICS FLEA MARKET 2015

Sponsored by ASVARO

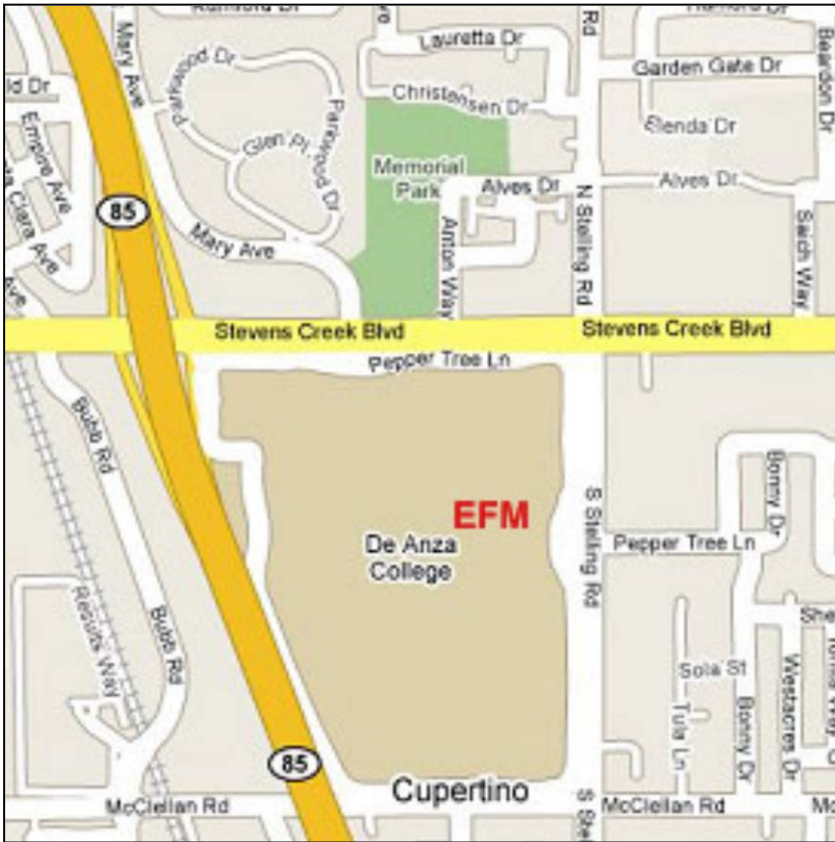
The Association of Silicon Valley Amateur Radio Organizations

[www.electronicfleamarket.com](http://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. (~ ¼ 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 2015

Saturday, Mar. 14  
Saturday, Apr. 11  
Saturday, May 9  
Saturday, June 13  
Saturday, July 11  
Saturday, Aug. 8  
Saturday, Sep. 12

Hosted by **Foothills Amateur Radio Society (FARS)**  
Hosted by Silicon Valley Emergency Communications System (SVECS)  
Hosted by West Valley Amateur Radio Association (WVARA)  
Hosted by Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association (PAARA)  
Hosted by South Peninsula Amateur Radio Klub (SPARK)  
Hosted by Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association (SCCARA)  
Hosted by Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System (SPECS)

**Volunteers needed!**

*See you on March 14<sup>th</sup> !!*



## 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, April 18<sup>th</sup>  
8 AM  
Mountain View, CA  
[www.baears.com](http://www.baears.com)

## FARS Email Notices

Easy to subscribe!  
[www.k6ya.org/mail](http://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.*

**Next Meeting: 3PM on March 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Location:** Panera Bread in Cupertino  
(20807 Stevens Creek Blvd)

Join the Yahoo Group:

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ba\\_radio\\_builders/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ba_radio_builders/)

More Info:

[www.barbc.org](http://www.barbc.org)

## AGENDA

for the next BARC Meeting

Bay Area Radio Builders Club

- TAK-40 SSB Transceiver (tak-40.wikidot.com) unit testing all 5 boards (including Ed's front panel)
- Solutions for FAR Circuits board flaws
- PIC LCD and encoder assembler and C programming
- iCP01 programmer & PIC-DIP40 Development Board from China
- Hardware & software issues with the Wintek WD-C2401P LCD
- Ultimate3S QRSS/WSPR \$29 quarter-watt transmitter and Si5351A Synthesizer (\$7.50) from QRP-labs.com and hanssummers.com
- Silicon Labs Si4735 AM/FM/SW/LW broadcast receiver chip from Sparkfun for \$10
- What can you do with a 59-cent PIC10F202 (4 pins, 512 byte program, 24 bytes data)?
- Graphical displays: Sparkfun Arduino Microview (\$40) & Micro 64x48 OLED Breakout Board (\$18)
- Ed LeBel's latest inventions, such as his I2C buss sniffer

Please bring your own  
electronic projects  
to BARC for  
**Show & Tell.**  
The best way to learn  
is to **experiment**  
and **share** your experiences.

# 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](http://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](http://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 4/18, 8 AM @ Mountain View (exam starts at 4 PM)

### **Sunnyvale VEC Exams, [www.amateur-radio.org](http://www.amateur-radio.org) –**

Holds test sessions on Saturdays often alternating between Sunnyvale and Redwood City.  
*Walk-ins only, no pre-registrations. \$15*

- Saturday 2/28, 10:30 AM @ Redwood City
- Saturday 3/14, 10:30 AM @ Sunnyvale
- Saturday 3/28, 10:30 AM @ Redwood City



### **Silicon Valley ARRL VE Exams, [www.svve.org](http://www.svve.org) –**

Holds test sessions on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 3/7
- Saturday 3/21
- Saturday 4/4

### **Tri-City VE Group Exams, [http://www.sbara.org/tricity\\_ve.html](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*

- Saturday 3/14, 9:00 AM
- Tuesday 4/14, 6:30 PM
- Saturday 5/9, 9:00 AM

**CURRENT US AMATEUR RADIO BAND PLAN: [www.arrl.org/band-plan](http://www.arrl.org/band-plan) ([click here for printable PDF](#))**

Effective March 5, 2012

# CLUB INFORMATION

[www.fars.k6ya.org](http://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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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

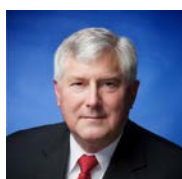
PO Box 399, San Carlos, CA 94070

Also available at FARS meetings.

Photos © K6YL unless noted otherwise.



Mikel KN6QI



Steve K6OIK



Dick N6ATD



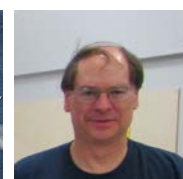
Phil KA6MZE



Joanna K6YL



Charlie KI6FX Y



Bob WB2URF



Doña KI6DAR

# FARS New Membership / Renewal Form

The annual dues for 2015 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 95011-2551



## **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)