

March 2015

See you down the log!

Volume 45, Number 3

www.fars.k6ya.org

MARCH CLUB MEETING

When & Where

Date: [Friday, March 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:
Ground is a Myth!

Speaker:
Kristin K6WX



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.

1st Prize: Yaesu FT-60R HT
2m/70cm Handheld Transceiver, 5w Output

2nd Prize: MFJ-261 Dry Dummy Load
100W, DC-500 MHz

3rd Prize: Diamond SMA 2m/440cm HT Antenna
SRH77CA

4th Prize: 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

* 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

- 27** **FARS Club Meeting**, Covington School, Los Altos, CA, 7PM
Presentation: **Ground is a Myth!**
Speaker: Kristen K6WX

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.*
17-19 [66th International DX Convention](#), Visalia, CA
www.dxconvention.org
Forums, exhibits, banquet, prizes & more!
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

MAY

- 9 [Electonics Flea Market](#), De Anza College, Cupertino, 5AM
10 [BARC Meeting](#), Panera Bread, Cupertino, 3PM
*Bay Area Radio Builders Club. Sponsored by FARS.
See the website / Yahoo Group for details.*
13 Board Meeting, Los Altos, CA, 7:30PM
22 **FARS Club Meeting**, Covington School, Los Altos, CA, 7PM

UPCOMING

- 6/27** [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!
New location – San Ramon



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 scheduled for March 27th and our talk is "Ground is a Myth!" with Kristen McIntyre K6WX. Kristen talks about how our understanding of electrical RF ground is oversimplified and the reality is much more complicated. This may help to explain why ground doesn't always behave as we expect. See bottom of this page for details.

FARS Electronics Flea Market Fundraiser on March 14th – Thank you volunteers!

The FARS edition of the Electronics Flea Market was a success thanks to our volunteers. Gate Crew: Michael NE6RD, Charlie KI6FXY, Paul KK6HWN, and Phil KA6MZE. Early Crew: Ray W6FQY, Joanna K6YL, Dave W6DLF, and Dick N6ATD. Mid-Morning Crew: Jerry K6GAC, Rich W6APZ, Mike KJ6ZOM, and Rohan KJ6LXV. Late Morning Crew: Doña KI6DAR, Paul AA6PZ, Jose KJ6WCX, and Andy KD6DD. There were few who dropped in to help, including Dave K6WA. See pages 4-6 for photos.



See the

A special thanks to Dick N6ATD for handling supplies and cash, to Michael NE6RD and Charlie KI6FXY for early duty and handling the gate, and to Ray W6FQY for handling the equipment transport, loading, and unloading. Apologies to anyone I've neglected to mention.

Electronics Flea Market on April 11th. This is the second Saturday of April and the sponsor is SVECS. There is a flea market each month March through September. Full details at www.electronicfleamarket.com.

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 website 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.

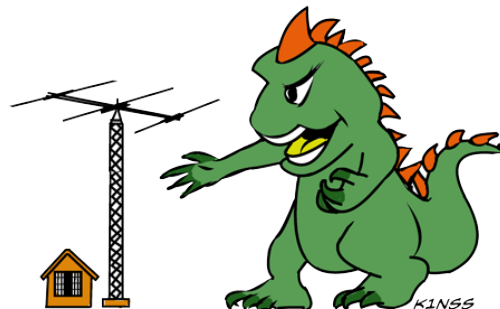
de Mikel KN6QI

M A R C H M E E T I N G

Ground is a Myth!

Ground is something you stand on, but in an electrical sense, the meaning is much less clear. When it comes to Hams and ground, things get really confused. We drive rods into the earth, but why? Let's take a look at whether any of this makes sense, and what theory tells us about "ground", and if it exists in any sensible way at all. We'll talk about DC grounds, RF grounds, and even about gravity.

About the speaker: Kristen McIntyre, K6WX, has been interested in radio since she was about 5 years old. She started in Amateur Radio in 1979 getting her ticket while at MIT. Kristen has worked in many diverse areas from analog circuit design to image processing to starting and running an ISP. She is currently working at Apple in Core OS, and spent many years at Sun Microsystems Laboratories where she was researching robustness and emergent properties of large distributed computer systems. She is a long time denizen of Silicon Valley and has worked at or consulted for many of the usual suspects. Kristen is an active ham and loves to chase DX on HF with her Elecraft K2 which she built while visiting her mother in Florida. She is an ARRL Technical Coordinator for the East Bay Section, president of the Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association, and is active in many local clubs.



FARS ELECTRONICS FLEA MARKET

Report & Photos



*Thank you to the volunteers
who made this fundraiser possible!*



On March 14th FARS hosted the [Electronics Flea Market](#) at DeAnza College in Cupertino. This summer flea market is held once a month and is organized by [ASVARO](#) for the benefit of amateur radio organizations in the Silicon Valley. For the Foothills Amateur Radio Society the opportunity to host the event for one of the months results in a vital source of income, which could not be accomplished without dedicated volunteers.



The Gate Team!

Thank you for controlling entry of vendors to the flea market, collecting fees, and waking up super duper early.

Michael NE6RD
Phil KA6MZE
Paul KK6HWN
Mikel KN6QI
Charlie KI6FX (not pictured)

There was a good vendor turn out this month.



FARS ELECTRONICS FLEA MARKET

Report & Photos

Cheers to the team! This fundraiser was a success!

This year's Electronics Flea Market was a great fundraiser for FARS. I am not aware of the total money raised, but I assisted with the early morning shift and we were already down to the last 3 boxes of donuts when I left. Excellent!



The Sales Force!

Sales consisted of donuts, hot coffee, and cold drinks. The team did a great job with sales.

Ray W6FQY
Joanna K6YL
Dave W6DLF
Dick N6ATD
Jerry K6GAC
Rich W6APZ
Dave K6WA

Mike KJ6ZOM
Rohan KJ6LXV
Doña KI6DAR
Paul AA6PZ
Jose KJ6WCX
Andy KR6DD

And anyone I neglected to mention!
Thank you all.



The sky starts to lighten as the early morning turns to mid-morning, and the two Honda generators continue to brew pot after pot of coffee.

Hot sellers continue to be old fashioned donuts, maple donuts, and plain donuts.

If only we had thought to bring pie for Pie Day!
3/14/15

FARS ELECTRONICS FLEA MARKET

Report & Photos

Put the dates on your calendar! The Electronics Flea Market is held on the second Saturday (pre-dawn) of each month, March through September, 5AM to 12 noon, located in the parking lot of De Anza College in Cupertino.



Dick N6ATD with our stylin' cash box.



Rich W6APZ and Mike KJ6ZOM selling donuts.



Rohan KJ6LXV, Mike KJ6ZOM, and Doña KI6DAR.



Solder on! There was a nice selection of goodies for hams.



RADIO FEST 2015

Report & Photos

March 7th was a beautiful day in Del Rey Oaks, California. The Monterey Moose Family Center again provided the location for Radio Fest, with plenty of space for vendors, the indoor/outdoor swap meet, and a room for presentations. Numerous raffle prizes throughout the day provided additional excitement, and the hearty breakfast and tasty lunch were enjoyed by many. The event was sponsored by the Navel Postgraduate School Amateur Radio Club (NPSARC).



Need a tennis ball antenna launcher? Done!



HF pack action!



Badges from Q.R. Zed Engraving

MAKER FAIRE 2015 – VE SESSIONS

Information

This year's SF Bay Area MakerFaire will be held May 16-17 and will feature two **Amateur Radio Test Sessions** for the Technician Class license. This is a first! Please spread the word so we can welcome new hams into our incredible hobby.

WHEN: May 16 and 17 at 7:45AM

WHERE: Maker Faire at the San Mateo County Event Center

SESSION WEBSITE: <https://mfhamtest.wordpress.com/>

IMPORTANT INFO: Tests are available by appointment only (no walkins) and each day is limited to 30 people.



HOW IT WILL WORK:

The test sessions will be held on Saturday and Sunday in the morning, before the Maker Faire opens. A guide will meet you at either the East gate or West gate promptly at 7:45am on both days.

You will be able to take the Technician Class license test only – no General or Extra Class tests will be given. If you don't pass, you will not have the opportunity to re-take the exam on the same day. (But of course you can retake the exam on the following day at the Maker Faire, or at another VE session on a different day.)

Upon arrival at the test site everyone should please fill out all forms. We will verify all your paperwork before you start.

We will then hand you your exam and you can start taking your test. You will have about an hour to finish the exam. Please note that we will be required to have the test site cleared by 10:00am.

When you finish, please sit quietly and wait for the Volunteer Examiners to grade your exam. We will ask that you sit and wait until 10:00am when the Maker Faire opens. We suggest that you bring something to read.

HELPFUL HINTS:

- Study! A good place to start is the [ARRL Technician License study materials](#).
- Connect with other Maker Hams. Go to www.makerfaire.com and click "Check Out The Program for Maker Faire Bay Area 2015", then click "Meet The Makers". Browse By Topic and click "Ham Radio" – there are several Maker Ham groups at the event who will want to meet you and congratulate you on passing your test!
- Additional helpful hints can be found at <https://mfhamtest.wordpress.com/>

WHAT YOU ARE EXPECTED TO BRING:

- A government-issued photo ID: Driver's license, passport, or military ID.
- \$15 cash (exact change please), or a check or money order made out to "ARRL VEC".
- Additional requirements can be found at <https://mfhamtest.wordpress.com/>

See you at Maker Faire 2015!



HENRY COE BACKCOUNTRY WEEKEND 2015

Information

This year's Henry Coe Backcountry Weekend will be held the weekend of April 24-26th, providing easy access to the remote and beautiful east side of the park which includes the Orestimba Wilderness.

Henry W. Coe State Park is the largest state park in northern California!

Barely an hour's drive southeast of San Jose, Henry W. Coe State Park protects and preserves 87,000 acres of scenic hills and mountain ridges. This wild largeley undeveloped park welcomes backpackers, equestrians, mountain bikers, day-hikers, and anyone seeking solitude in a nearly untouched setting.

** 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/pineridgeassociation/component/eventlist/details/70-2015-backcountry-weekend>.

For more information about volunteering to provide communication support please contact Dave W6DLF at email address daveflack at comcast dot net. He will likely also be at the April FARS meeting.

See you in the backcountry!

VETERANS ON THE AIR

Report & Photo

These familiar hams hosted a Special Event Station at American Legion Post 474 on March 7-8th with the goal of introducing Veterans to amateur radio and even putting them on the air. The next event is April 4-5th from 1800UTC to 0100 UTC (10AM PST to 5PM PST) so look out for them on 40 to 10 meters under callsign **W6RMM**. Every contact with receive a special QSL card, and as always with special event stations the ops would appreciate if you could take the time to spot them on a network such as DXSummit. See you on the air!



Left to right:

Keith K6ZJI
Byron N6UOB
Daniel K6DLC



ELECTRONICS FLEA MARKET 2015

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 2015

Saturday, Mar. 14	Hosted by Foothills Amateur Radio Society (FARS)	
Saturday, Apr. 11	Hosted by Silicon Valley Emergency Communications System (SVECS)	***Next!***
Saturday, May 9	Hosted by West Valley Amateur Radio Association (WVARA)	
Saturday, June 13	Hosted by Palo Alto Amateur Radio Association (PAARA)	
Saturday, July 11	Hosted by South Peninsula Amateur Radio Klub (SPARK)	
Saturday, Aug. 8	Hosted by Santa Clara County Amateur Radio Association (SCCARA)	
Saturday, Sep. 12	Hosted by Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System (SPECS)	

See you on April 11th !!

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 18th
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.*

Next Meeting: 3PM on April 12th

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

Join the Yahoo Group:

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

More Info:

www.barbc.org

AGENDA

for the next BARC Meeting 4/12/15

Bay Area Radio Builders Club

- Goal: Homebrew the TAK-40 SSB/CW Transceiver (tak-40.wikidot.com)
- Get both VFO's working
- Install PA bifilar inductors
- MPLAB X PIC LCD and encoder assembler and C programming
- Cost compromises caused problems we are solving, such as: hardware & software issues with the Wintek WD-C2401P LCD
- Microchip FilterLab 2.0 designs audio filters and is free
- VB-Audio LF_Generator freeware
- Ultimate3S \$29 QRSS/WSPR beacon transmitter
- Graphical displays, such as 4D Systems uLCD-32PTU
- 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 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 4/18, 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 3/28, 10:30 AM @ Redwood City
- Saturday 4/11, 10:30 AM @ Sunnyvale
- Saturday 4/25, 10:30 AM @ Redwood City



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 4/4
- Saturday 4/18
- Saturday 5/2

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

Also see [page 8](#)
for details on
VE sessions
at the upcoming

Maker Faire

on 5/16 and 5/17
in San Mateo!

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

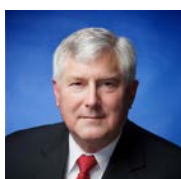
PO Box 399, San Carlos, CA 94070

Also available at FARS meetings.

Photos © K6YL unless noted otherwise.



Mikel KN6QI



Steve K6OIK



Dick N6ATD



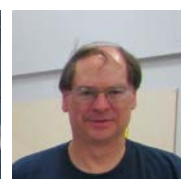
Phil KA6MZE



Joanna K6YL



Charlie KI6FX Y



Bob WB2URF



Doña KI6DAR

FARS New Membership / Renewal Form

The annual dues for 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)