



P.O. Box 6421, Auburn, CA 95604

FEBRUARY 2026

<https://www.w6ek.org>

At The Key at SFARC:

PRESIDENT

Mark Koehler (W2MWK)

VICE PRESIDENTS

Jim Jupin (WA8MPA)

Greg Dolkas (KO6TH)

SECRETARY

Bob Patton (N6EMS)

TREASURER

Ron (KA6UAI) and Laurie Holland

DIRECTORS

Greydon Hicks (KC6SLE)

Frank Calvillo (KG9M)

Steven Foley (KO6EBQ)

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Smitty (WB1G)

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

Jeff Morgan (KW6U)

VE TESTING COORDINATOR

Brian Gohl (AI6US)

WEBMASTER(S)

Smitty (WB1G)

Greg Dolkas (KO6TH)

STATION TRUSTEE

Clyde Campbell (AB4CC)

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Jim Zheng (W6JCZ)

GROUPS.IO ADMINISTRATOR

Aaron Bond (W1ATB)

DROPBOX ADMINISTRATOR

Smitty (WB1G)

ELMER LEAD

Greydon Hicks (KC6SLE)

ADVANCEMENT / CLASSES

Chair: Orion Endres (AI6JB)

Instructor(s): Orion Endres (AI6JB), Anders Rehnvall (NR6H), and James Goldstene (AE6JG)

WEEKLY CLUB NET

Thursdays @ 7:30 PM

W6EK 2m Repeater @ 145.430 MHz

Primary Net Control Operators:

Dave Jenkins (WB6RBE)

Orion Endres (AI6JB)

Chip Bautista (KM6MDF)

Smitty (WB1G)

COFFEE BREAK NET

365 Days A Year 7:30 AM – 10 AM

W6EK 2m Repeater @ 145.430 MHz

Primary Net Control Operators:

- Brian Gohl (AI6US)
- Gerry Brentnall (WA6E)
- Theta Brentnall (WA6EWF)
- Tom Newman (NN6H)
- Orion Endres (AI6JB)
- Jeff Morgan (KW6U)

Standby Net Control Operators:

- Smitty (WB1G)
- Don Hay (WB6LPJ)
- Aaron Bond (W1ATB)

CLUB MEETINGS

Second Friday of the month,
Confluence Church @ 7:30 PM
1101 Auburn Ravine Rd, Auburn, CA

CLUB EVENTS

Amateur Radio License Exam Session

February 2 @ 7 PM

Confluence Church

1101 Auburn Ravine Rd, Auburn, CA

General Meeting

February 13 @ 7:30 PM

PCHHS Conference Center or [Online via Zoom](#)
Cordova Room 500, 11434 B Ave, Auburn, CA

Breakfast Social

February 28 @ 7:30 AM

The Original Mel's Diner

1730 Grass Valley Hwy #2885, Auburn, CA

Radio Direction Finding

February 28 @ 9 AM

Location TBD

Visit our [website](#) for more information

REPEATERS

145.430 MHz (-0.6 MHz / CTCSS 162.2)

AllStarLink: 51018

EchoLink: 4128

Wires-X: W6EK-2M-ROOM (62545)

223.860 MHz (-1.6 MHz / CTCSS 110.9)

440.575 MHz (+5.0 MHz / CTCSS 162.2)

AMS – Fusion C4FM & Analog FM

Wires-X: NorCal Repeater GRP (43847)

YSF: US-NorCalRptGrp (06040)

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SFARC President | Mark Koehler (W2MWK)



Hello Sierra Foothills hams,

As we head into February, our club continues to thrive thanks to the enthusiasm and participation of our members. Winter is the perfect time to explore new operating modes, test your gear, and take part in some of the year's most enjoyable radio events. Whether you're into contesting, mentoring new hams, or just chatting on the repeater, there's something this month for everyone.

Speaking of winter, by the time you are reading this we have completed the Winter Field Day event. If you participated on your own please remember the to club can get credit if your submittal includes our club name. See the ARRL site for details on submitting WF day results.

Remember that our next general membership meeting on February 13th will be at the Health and Human Services conference center on 11434 B ave in Auburn. Go to w6ek.org for directions and details. There will be club banners at the site to help direct you to our meeting in the Cordova room. I look forward to see you all there or on Zoom.

Get Involved and Volunteer

Our club thrives because of the time and talent our members contribute. Whether it's helping with repeater maintenance, supporting public service events, assisting with HamFest, Field Day, or mentoring new hams, your involvement keeps SFARC strong and vibrant. If you'd like to lend a hand, reach out to any of the club officers or committee chairs. Every bit of help makes a difference!

Thank you all for keeping the Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club one of the most active and welcoming clubs around. I'm looking forward to seeing you at our next meeting and hearing you on the air.

73,

Mark Koehler, W2MWK

President, Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club

LOOKING FORWARD

SFARC Vice Presidents | Jim Jupin (WA8MPA) and Greg Dolkas (KO6TH)



For the February 2026 meeting, Jef N5JEF will be talking about a couple of emerging, frontier technologies that will have wide applicability to our future, and a playground, sandbox, or experimental lab for hands-on exploration. These include Spread Spectrum (particularly LoRa) as an effective RF physical layer, and Mesh Network routing, which is an evolving framework for communication that is off-grid, decentralized, resilient, and low-power.

Why are these interesting?

Spread Spectrum modulation makes communication in our increasingly noisy RF environment more reliable, and Mesh Routing extends that communication capability far beyond the direct point-to-point radio horizon. Between the two we can expect longer communication range, with increased reliability.

In his day job, Jef is a senior analyst with the County of Placer Radio Services Group, focused on mission critical public safety and environmental utilities radio systems. The group develops and supports systems including the P25 trunking system for regional law enforcement and public service agencies. Before that, he was a technical and field service manager for over twenty years in scientific instruments for laboratory, industrial, and semiconductor metrology. He is also into emergency management, search and rescue, and personal preparedness, and is, he says, "a total science and technology nerd."



NEW MEETING LOCATION

**PLACER COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CONFERENCE CENTER | ROOM 500 | CORDOVA ROOM**

**11434 B AVE
AUBURN, CA 95603**

OPEN HOUSE
February 13th, 2026
@ 7:30 PM

new location

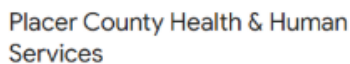
MORE INFO

**11434 B AVE
AUBURN, CA 95603**

February 13th, 2026
@ 7:30 PM

new location

MORE INFO

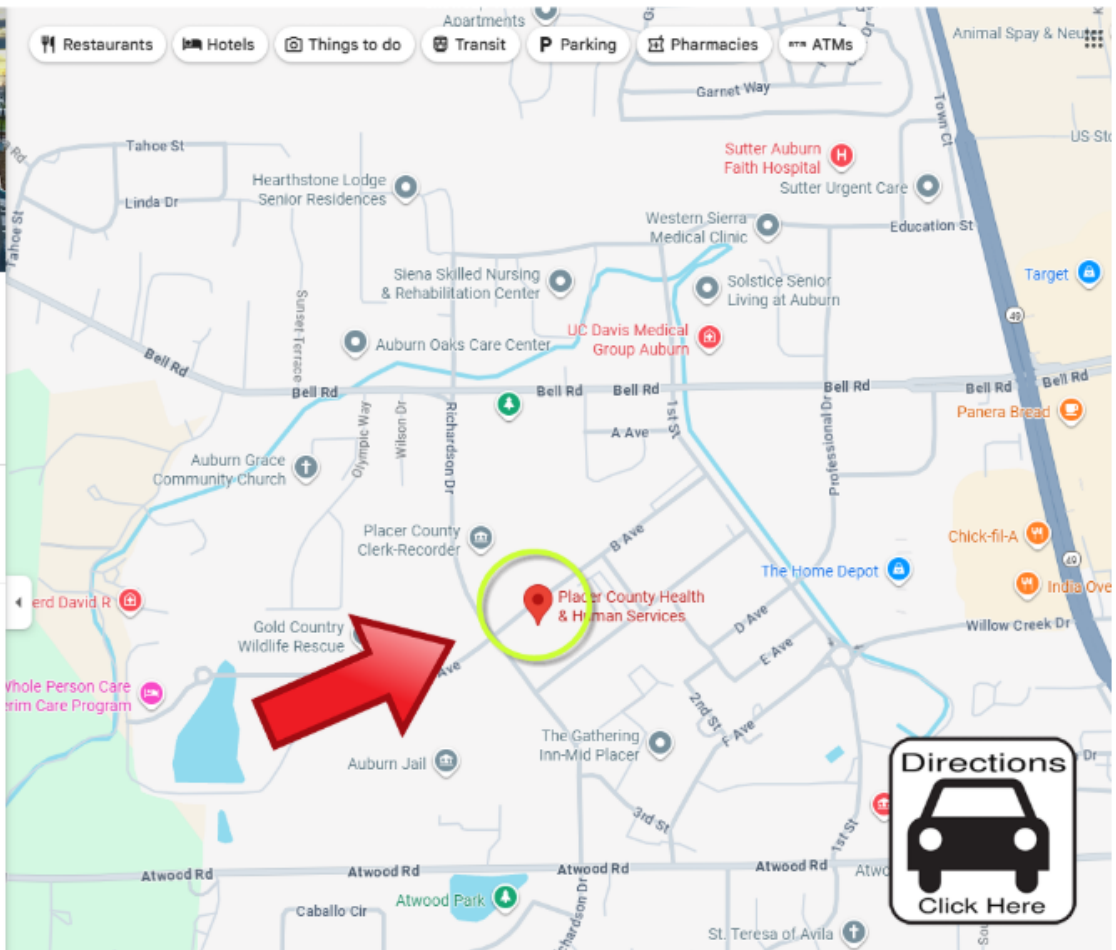
Public health department •

About



Shan

Add a label





SFARC members gather for a breakfast at 7:30 AM on the last Saturday of every month. January's breakfast brought a large crowd that enjoyed great food and many interesting conversations. Come join us and be part of the fun!

VE TESTING REPORT

SFARC VE Testing Coordinator | Brian Gohl (AI6US)

The Sierra Foothills VE Team held our monthly amateur radio exam session on January 5, 2026 at the Confluence Church campus. After a delicious dinner and a side of awesome conversations at the Auburn, CA Thai Garden Restaurant, we administered exams for 8 candidates with a 100% success! Thank you to the VE Team: Smitty - WB1G (Exam Room VEC), Steven -KO6EBQ, Gary - KQ6RT, Frank – KG9M and Brian – AI6US. Also a big shout out to the excellent welcome and mentorship provided by the Elmer team lead by Greydon – KC6SLE, Gerry – WA6E, Theta – WA6EWF, Jim – WA8MPA, Bob – N6EMS, Frank – KG6M, Greg - KO6TH

Congratulations to the new and upgrading amateur radio operators!

New Technician Licensees

- Thomas Allen KO6LXG (Gary Willet's, KB7QWC son)
- Melissa Cowan KO6LXO
- Colby Hankins KO6LXB (Jeff Hankin's – KO6LXB son)

Upgrade to General

- Joel Grove KO6LFI
- Gregory Larkin KN6WGV (Western States Endurance Run - Radio Comms Director)
- Gary Schlusser KO6KLC

Upgrade to Extra

- Jeremiah Dauphinais K6GQP
- Jeff Hankins KO6KVZ (Sierra Foothills VE Team member)

Our next Ham Exam session will be on February 2, 2026, 7pm at the Confluence Church Campus (see the club calendar for details). All members are invited to join us for the pre-session VE / Elmer dinner. This month, we will be enjoying Brewster's Burgers, 13470 Lincoln Way, Auburn, CA 95603.

HAMFEST IS LESS THAN 60 DAYS AWAY

ARE YOU READY?

10 years strong, the Loomis Hamfest returns for 2026!
We're looking for volunteers, can you help?

helpathamfest.w6ek.org

THE FIRST AND BIGGEST HAMSWAP OF THE YEAR
10 YEARS STRONG



LOOMIS HAMFEST



JOIN THE SIERRA FOOTHILLS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB FOR HAMFEST 2025!

GRAB YOUR GEAR, GET YOUR WALLET, AND GET READY FOR A SUPER SWAP.
WE'LL HAVE COFFEE AND DONUTS, ELMER TOURS, A TEST TABLE,
PRIZES EVERY 15 MINUTES, AND SO MUCH MORE.

MARCH 28TH, 2026 @ 0700

**HISTORIC LOOMIS TRAIN DEPOT
5775 HORSESHOE BAR ROAD, LOOMIS, CA**

**SELLERS \$10
SETUP @ 0600**

WIN PRIZES!

**FREE ADMISSION
AND PARKING**



**JUST ANNOUNCED
WE'LL BE GIVING AWAY
A SHARK RF M1KE**



MORE PRIZES ANNOUNCED SOON!!

10TH ANNUAL LOOMIS HAMFEST

SFARC Hamfest Committee Chair | Frank Calvillo (KG9M)

The Big Day is Almost Here!

Mark your calendars for the first and best swap meet of the year at the **Historic Loomis Train Depot!** Whether you are looking to score a great deal on a new rig, classic equipment, or nearly any ham radio accessory, or just want to socialize with fellow hams, this is the event of the season.

- **Date:** Saturday, March 28, 2026
- **Time:** 7:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (Sellers arrive at 6:00 a.m.)
- **Location:** 5775 Horseshoe Bar Road, Loomis, CA
- **Admission & Parking:** **FREE** for all buyers.

Information for Sellers

- **Cost:** \$10 per space (cash only), first-come, first-served.
- **Requirements:** Sellers must bring their own tables and chairs. No electrical power is provided.
- **Required Paperwork:** Per California law, all sellers must complete [CDTFA Form 410d](#). You can save time registering by bringing a signed copy to expedite your entry. Staff will also have forms on site.
- **Club Table:** SFARC Members wishing to sell 1–2 items can place them at the Club Table for free. Please include your contact info and selling price. Unsold items must be picked up by 11:00 a.m.

Event Highlights

Prize Drawings: Buy tickets for a chance to win cool prizes, including a [Shark RF M1KE](#). More prizes to be announced soon!

Elmer Tours: New to the hobby? Our experienced "Elmers" will give you a guided tour of the swap meet to explain what the gear is and why you might need it.

The Test Table: Don't buy a "boat anchor"! Bring potential purchases to our test bench, equipped with smart hams to help you test, power supplies, antenna analyzers, and other diagnostic equipment.

ARRL Booth: Loomis Hamfest 2026 is an ARRL-sanctioned event. Visit with the Section Manager and pick up the latest US Amateur Radio Bands charts.

Food: Fresh coffee and donuts will be available to keep you fueled while you shop.

Call for Volunteers

The Loomis Hamfest is the Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club (SFARC) 's largest fundraiser, and **we need your help!** We are looking for volunteers to help with **Setup and Teardown, Parking, Security, Concessions, and the Test Bench**. Volunteers will receive a **free coffee and donut** as a thank you. The more volunteers we have, the shorter the shifts will be so that everyone can enjoy the event. Please visit hamfest.w6ek.org to register as a volunteer or ask a question. THANK YOU!

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

SFARC Membership Coordinator | Jeff Morgan (KW6U)

Congratulations to the newest members of SFARC who were voted in at January's general club meeting!



Judd Strong	W6TGS
James Harry	KK6KYR
Richard Stricklin	KB6BHB
Gary Schussler	K06KLC
Glenn Weatherspoon	K06LGP
Dan Quistgard	K06LMZ
Keith Owen	K06LGI
Corde Wagner	K06LDA

We have 10 new members to vote on at the next club meeting on February 13.

John Moorehead	KE6JEM
Richard Walter	WB3CSY
Michelle Russo	K06LNG
David Nash	K06LON
Jose Cueva	AK6PE
Robin Goldstein	W6RDG
James Ewald	N7ZFI
John Tegan	WL7B00
Arthur Botrell III	KD60
David Porter	K06LDD



SFARC ON SOCIAL MEDIA

X (TWITTER) <https://x.w6ek.com>
FACEBOOK <https://facebook.w6ek.com>
INSTAGRAM <https://instagram.w6ek.com>
YOUTUBE <https://youtube.w6ek.org>
LINKEDIN <https://linkedin.w6ek.org>
GROUPS.IO <https://w6ek.groups.io>



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

SFARC Secretary | Bob Patton (N6EMS)

01/08/2026 at 1730 Hrs

Attendance

President – Mark W2MWK

Vice Pres – Greg KO6TH & Jim WA8MPA

Secretary – Bob N6EMS

Director – Greydon – KC6SLE

Director – Frank KG9M

Director – Steven KO6EBQ

Committee Chairs

Brian – AI6US

Jim – W6JCZ

Smitty – WB1G

Aaron – W1ATB

Past Board

Dave – N6OJJ

The meeting was called to order and officer, and board member reports were given. Mark started by reporting the summary of Christmas party expenditures to close out the financial year.

Committee Chair Reports

Repeater Committee – Brian AI6US discussed changing some equipment out in the vault.

Newsletter – Jim W6JCZ had nothing to report but ask to have items for the newsletter submitted timely.

Webmaster/Social Media/PIO – Smitty WB1G discussed email and groups.io updates. 1.2K followers on social media.

VE Exam – Brian AI6US gave an update on most recent session.

Christmas Party – Brian AI6US will circulate online feedback form.

Hamfest – Frank KG9M (New chair) Hamfest set for 03/28/2026 and will begin planning meetings. First meeting 01/15/2026 at 6 PM on Zoom.

Old Business

There was a discussion of insurance for the trailers and procedure change for food donations at the general meetings.

New Business

Financial Audit – discussion of need of person to lead this.

Confirm Christmas Party – Location and dates to follow.

Scholarship – Jim WA8MPA presented draft of letter to schools. Discussed and made minor changes.

General meeting location change – PCHHS, insurance certificate submitted, Tech/IT meeting. Meeting format changes to shorten the general meetings.

HRO gift cards – agreed to purchase at one time for distribution monthly.

Motion made by Greydon KC6SLE and seconded by Greg KO6TH to purchase signage stands. There was a short discussion, and the motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Meeting was adjourned at 1925 Hrs.

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

SFARC Secretary | Bob Patton (N6EMS)

Date and Time: 2026-01-09 19:27:16

Location: Confluence Church Gym

The meeting was called to order by the president and the pledge was recited.

Members and Online Attendees Verified

Attendance estimated between 45-50 participants present at this meeting and 28 people on Zoom, which marks the first gathering of 2026 under the leadership of a new president.

Meeting Procedures and Format Updates

The meeting emphasized a renewed format, targeting a 90-minute duration to ensure conclusion by 9:00 PM, including member and officer updates. Committee information will be primarily shared via newsletter and website. Members are encouraged to use the "contact us" form on the website for feedback and queries.

Presentation and Social Session Adjustments

Regular meetings will feature reduced presentations (one short and one 20-minute session per month), followed by a 15-20 minute social period to stay within the time limit. There will also be a drawing with two \$25 HRO gift certificates awarded per session.

New Meeting Location Announcement

Starting next month, meetings will be relocated to the Placer County Health and Human Services Center in Auburn, featuring a modern AV system, enhanced sound, two integrated screens for Zoom participants, break room access, and generous after-hours parking. Abundant signage, maps, and volunteer guides will facilitate the transition on February 13, 2026.

Club Officers' and Committee Reports

Officer and director reports were brief. Thanks were extended to the outgoing board and committee chairs for effective transition support. The secretary and treasurer reported no new updates for this session.

Financial Overview and Christmas Event

Christmas event expenses totaled approximately \$4,500; nearly \$1,000 collected through \$10 donations at the door. Budget outcomes met expectations. Planning is underway for next year's Christmas party at the new facility, pending confirmation.

Elmer Program Recognition

The club currently recognizes 23 Elmers (mentors), with a call for additional interested members. Mark was formally awarded his Elmer badge.

Hamfest Planning

Hamfest is scheduled for March 28, 2026, at 7:00 PM at Historic Loomis Train Station—78 days (11 weeks and 1 day). Team leads are in place, and volunteer recruitment is ongoing. The event celebrates its 10th anniversary and has received ARRL event accreditation.

Membership and Renewals

Member count: 348 active members with a 65% renewal rate. Members were reminded to log in to Ham Club Online, verify information (especially e-mail and phone), and address any multi-year renewal issues. The club's management system does not support ARRL e-mail aliases.

Repeater and Mesh Network Update

Successful renewal of repeater license after five months in pending status. New mesh core equipment, the next evolution of Meshtastic, is to be installed at the repeater site within the coming week, improving regional communications infrastructure.

Volunteer Examiner (VE) Results

Three new Technicians, three General upgrades, and two Extra upgrades earned. Notable new licensees and upgrades include Tom (KO6LXG), Melissa (KO6LXO), Jeremiah (Extra), Colby Hankins (Technician), Greg Larkin (General), and Gary Schneider (KO6KLC, General).

Group Communication and Social Media

Groups.io platform functioning as intended. Facebook group membership has grown to approximately 1,200. Event communication and promotion, especially regarding Ham Fest, are a high priority.

Volunteer Event Coordinator Activity

The club supports community events with radio communications. Recent involvement included a presentation at the IEEE Rising Stars conference in Las Vegas, introducing ham radio to students through hands-on activities and live contacts.

Announcement of Scholarships

Jim has important news: The club, thanks to Silent Key donor families, will award \$1,000 scholarships to STEM-focused students (primarily high school and some two-year program students) in the local area. The application period is open to club members and their families for 30 days, until the end of January. Afterward, the opportunity expands to five local high schools, working with school counselors. Application forms are available for download on the club website and will be distributed in schools.

within a month. Scholarship recipients will be selected by committee, focusing on seriousness and effort in the applications.

Club Events and Nets

Upcoming events include a repeat of the club breakfast and fox hunt on February 28, and the Loomis event at the end of March. Regular club activities are:

- Club net on Thursdays at 7:30 pm
- Elmer net on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday each month
- All-nodes net, every Monday at 6:00 pm
- In-the-shack net on every 2nd and 4th Wednesday at 7:30 pm (Zoom)
- Coffee break net every morning
- Club breakfast at Mel's, on the last Saturday of the month at 7:30 am

Radio Voice Procedures Presentation

Scott (KM6RFB), Placer County ARES EC, presented on voice radio procedures emphasizing clear, controlled communication in emergency contexts.

- Emotional tone influences incident outcomes: "When disaster is at its worst, communications must be at their best."
- Radio procedures involve both what you say (procedure) and how you say it (technique), focusing on security, accuracy, and discipline (SAD):
- Security: Pause and consider before speaking, avoid transmitting sensitive info, especially HIPAA.
- Accuracy: Use proper rhythm, speed, volume, pitch; speak so info can be written down easily.
- Discipline: Listen first, avoid chatter, answer promptly, speak briefly.
- Use standardized phonetics (NATO and APCO alphabets). Pronounce numbers as zero, one, two, three, four, five. Calling procedure: "[Your call], this is [their call], over." Use terms like "loud", "good", "weak" for signal reporting instead of codes like 599.
- Examples were given: Effective incident communications helped manage crises; loss of calm or inappropriate attitudes hampered coordination and clarity.

Prize Drawing

The meeting concluded with a prize drawing.

Winning tickets:

- KK6USM James Layton
- KO6DRM Dudley McFadden

Participants were invited to help tidy the room at the end.

The meeting was adjourned at 2100 Hrs.

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SINCE 1992**

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SFARC members in good standing can request to have a business-card sized advertisement displayed in the club newsletter. Contact the newsletter editor for more information about how you can have your card in this space.