



P.O. Box 6421, Auburn, CA 95604

MAY 2026

<https://www.w6ek.org>

At The Key at SFARC:

PRESIDENT

Mark Koehler (W2MWK)

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Greg Dolkas (KO6TH)

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Steven Foley (KO6EBQ)

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Jeff Morgan (KW6U)
Dudley McFadden (KO6DRM)

VE TESTING COORDINATOR

Brian Gohl (AI6US)

WEBMASTER(S)

Smitty (WB1G)
Greg Dolkas (KO6TH)

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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), James Goldstene (AE6JG), Steven Foley (KO6EBQ)

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,
PCHHS Conference Center @ 7:30 PM
Cordova Room 500, 11434 B Ave, Auburn, CA

CLUB EVENTS

Amateur Radio License Exam Session

May 4 @ 7 PM
Confluence Church
1101 Auburn Ravine Rd, Auburn, CA

Board Meeting

May 7 @ 6 PM
[Online via Zoom](#)

General Meeting

May 8 @ 7:30 PM
PCHHS Conference Center or [Online via Zoom](#)
Cordova Room 500, 11434 B Ave, Auburn, CA

Donuts and Coffee in the Park

May 9 @ 9 AM
Auburn Recreation Park Picnic Pavilion
123 Recreation Dr, Auburn, CA

Breakfast Social & Radio Direction Finding

May 30 @ 7:30 AM
The Original Mel's Diner
1730 Grass Valley Hwy #2885, Auburn, CA
Visit our [website](#) for more information about RDF

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)

In This Issue:

- President's Message
- Looking Forward
- VE Report
- Fox Hunt News
- Donuts and Coffee in the Park
- Board & General Meeting Minutes



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SFARC President | Mark Koehler (W2MWK)



April is only partially over as I write this newsletter article, but it feels like a whole month has passed since I last wrote.

We had a fantastic HamFest. I met many of you there. Some of you were selling off extra Ham gear, while others were acquiring the final piece of equipment to complete their shack. Of course, there were also a few who were doing both.

As you read this, I'm returning from a cruise that took me to parts of Turkey and the Greek Islands. I'm writing this in advance, hoping that this finds you all well and happy.

On April 15th, I had a chance to visit the Mountain Top voter receiver at the Auburn site with Jef - N5JEF and Brian - A16US to do a little maintenance. It was interesting to see how parts of our repeater system come together to give such amazing coverage. Below is a picture of the voter receiver in its new location in the rack.



We have more events coming up, so the excitement is still going strong. On May 9th, we're hosting Donuts in the Park, which is organized by the folks who bring us the Coffee Break Net every morning. I hope to see you at Recreation Park in Auburn at 9:00 a.m. Come out, grab a coffee and a donut (they're calorie-free when enjoyed outdoors), bring a radio and antenna, and try your hand at making some POTA contacts. Or, if you're feeling adventurous, show off your latest mobile setup.

And don't forget, we're starting the planning process for Field Day 2026 at Georgetown Airport the weekend of June 27th and 28th. We're looking for volunteers to help with antenna setup, station setup, and station operation.

Mark, W2MWK
SFARC President

LOOKING FORWARD

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



For the May meeting, Greg KO6TH will be discussing the art of charging LiFePO₄ (LFP) based batteries. It is, indeed, an art, something that we too often mistakenly try to turn into a trip to Ikea. Tab A into Slot B it is not. Separating Science from Marketing, this talk will reveal some of the fundamental realities of charging this particular breed of battery, which if followed should lead to long term success for both the battery and your well being. Can you get away without knowing this? Probably. Many do. But after understanding what's going on, at least you'll know what to expect.

VE REPORT

SFARC VE Coordinator | Brian Gohl (AI6US)

Breaking News: The Sierra Foothills VE team has accepted an invitation from W5YI to join a select group of teams to offer FREE license exams and FREE FCC license fee for anyone under the age of 25! Yes, you have read correctly! FREE! The W5YI Youth and Young Adult Licensing Program is covering all fees involved with administering exams and issuing an amateur radio license for anyone 25 years of age or younger! Supporting the next generation of amateur radio operators.

On April 6th 2026 we met for our 5pm dinner at Happy Wok in Auburn. Christina AK6DU and Thomas KM6MJB joined us during their vacation from Tennessee. After dinner we met at the Confluence Church campus to hold the exam session at 7 pm. 100% passing rate with five candidates successfully upgrading and one new Technician.

A BIG shout out to the new Technican amateur radio operator, 10 year old, Maxim Graff - ! The Sierra Foothills VE Team awarded Maxim the Daniel Fogard W6PRL scholarship with Free Exams and Free FCC License fee.

Congratulations to General license upgrade:
Gary Waters - KO6MSP

Congratulations to these new Extra upgrades:
Sam Johnson – K6KGU
Michael Kryss – KO6JQW
Marty Main – KO6GXX
Gary Schlussler AK6TA (formerly KO6KLC)

Exam Team:
VEC: Brian – AI6US
VE Lead: Anders – NR6H
Signing VEs: Frank – KG9M, Greydon – KC6SLE, Smitty – WB1G

Elmer Team:
Elmer Lead: Steven – KO6EBQ
Elmer Team: Bob – N6EMS, Christina – AK6DU, Thomas – KM6MJB, Greg – KO6TH, Jim – WA8MPA, Mark – W2MWK, Frank – KG9M

The next exam session will be 7pm on May 4, 2026 at the Confluence Church campus. Pre-register at www.hamstudy.org/sessions/sfarc. Come join us for the VE / Elmer dinner, 5pm at a team favorite: Taqueria La Herradura 760 Lincoln Way, Auburn, CA 95603



FOX HUNT NEWS

SFARC Elmer Lead | Greydon Hicks (KC6SLE)

As always, a fun and successful Fox Hunt on Saturday April 25. Thanks to Mat KO6IMP for being our Fox Tender for the day. The Fox was well hidden, yet finding it was achievable using the many hunting hardware, techniques and tricks (yes tricks are required too) that the group has learned and gathered throughout the many years. It was a smaller group this month due to the cool and damp weather, but as always, great group of HAMS to spend the morning with. We held the Hunt debrief at Burgers and Crème in Auburn.

Congratulations to Brian AI6US for being the first to find April's Fox. It took Brian less than 30 minutes. Here are the results for the day:

1. Brian AI6US
2. Greydon KC6SLE
3. Doug W2VX
4. Evan AJ6OR
5. Patrick AK6JP

The next SFARC Fox Hunt will be Saturday May 30, immediately following the monthly club breakfast at Mel's Diner in Auburn. As usual we will meet in the diner parking lot at 9 AM for the Fox Hunt briefing. The Hunt usually starts at 9:15 AM and ends at 11:00 AM. Our Fox Tenders for May will be Joshua KN6NUF and family. A big thank you to Joshua and family.

We'll see everyone for the May Fox Hunt. Bring you best Fox Hunting "tricks".

And good hunting every day.

Greydon KC6SLE

DONUTS AND COFFEE IN THE PARK

Do you like Donuts? Do you love coffee? If so, mark your calendar for Saturday, May 9, 2026 at 9 am. Donuts and Coffee in the Park returns to the Auburn Recreation Park Picnic Pavilion at 123 Recreation Dr, Auburn, CA 95603. The Coffee Break Net Control operators will be serving up fresh donuts, hot coffee and hot chocolate for you and your family. Bring your pups, a comfortable lawn chair and start your day visiting with friends and enjoying a perfect late spring morning. I heard that a few members plan on setting up their hf go-kits and there will be an easy fox hunt with a radio transmitter hidden somewhere in the park.

We are looking forward to see you at Donuts and Coffee in the Park!



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

SFARC Membership Coordinator | Dudley McFadden (KO6DRM)

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



Craig Dale	W9PAX
Stephen Kramme	KD6KXT
Donald Russell	W6DAR
Michael Miles	N7HLK
Samuel Rus	KO6MGC
Kristopher Poulos	KI6HFP
Jolayne Nash	KO6MSR

We have 1 new member to vote on at the next club meeting on May 8.

Lan Graff KO6MWK



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Repeater Priority Usage for Western States Endurance Run Training from May 23 at 8 AM to May 25 at 5 PM - ASL & Echolink will be in Monitor Mode - No Coffee Break Nets on May 23, 24, 25

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)

This summarizes the key discussions and action items from our recent special Zoom meeting on April 2, 2026

In Attendance:

Mark – W2MWK
Jim – WA8MPA
Greg – KO6TH
Bob – N6EMS
Smitty – WB1G
Greydon – KC6SLE
Brian – AI6US
Clyde – AB4CC

Key topics discussed:

- The need for more structure around net ownership and moderation, particularly concerning dead air and ensuring consistent operation.
- The distinction between club-owned nets and other nets operating on the repeater, and the implications for oversight and responsibility.
- The historical context of various nets, including the Coffee Break Net and the Weekly Net, and their evolution.
- Concerns regarding the use of the club's logo and content by external parties for monetized purposes, specifically Frank's YouTube channel and Facebook posts.
- The role of the trustee in approving nets and ensuring compliance with FCC rules.

Decisions made:

- Membership in the club is not required to be a net control host for a net.
- The club will implement guidelines for net owners, including responsibilities for scheduling, appointing substitutes, and making clear announcements about the net's affiliation with the club.
- The header on the Supermon page will be modified to a more generic background without the club logo to address concerns about external scraping and logo usage.

Action items and next steps:

- A script for net owners, outlining guidance and governance, will be crafted. — Team/Mark
- The club group rules on Facebook will be updated to prevent multiple promotions of YouTube channels or other monetized content by individuals. — Smitty
- The purpose and mission of the Thursday night net will be discussed to determine if it should be designated as a club asset. — Dave/Smitty

- A script for net owners, outlining guidance and governance, will be crafted. — Smitty(?)/Mark
- Find the Ares preamble file and send it to Mark — Greydon
- Craft a statement for net owners that Clyde can use as guidance — Mark
- Change the club group rules to prevent multiple promotions of YouTube channels with regular duration — Smitty
- Modify the Supermon header to be more generic with no logo — Brian
- Define what is a club net and what is not a club net in the club calendar — Smitty
- The ownership of each net will be formally defined. The ownership of each net will be formally defined. — Smitty
- Help Smitty with the verbiage for the club calendar definitions — Greydon
- Simple verbiage will be added to the club calendar to distinguish between club nets and non-club nets — Team

Greydon provided the following draft for the beginning and ending for repeater nets

Draft opening:

“Good (morning, afternoon, evening) and welcome to the (name of net) net. I am (name, call sign) and I am your host and net operator for the (name of net). The (name of net) net is sponsored by (name of owner(s) and/or facilitator(s)) who would like to thank the Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club for the use of the W6EK repeater.”

Draft closing:

“Thank you to everyone for attending the (name of net) net today. Again, this net is sponsored by (name of owner(s) or facilitator(s)). And once again we would like to thank the Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club for the use of the W6EK repeater. At this time I am returning the W6EK repeater to normal use , (name, call sign).”

March 25, 2026

Board of Directors
Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club
Auburn, California

In accordance with Article IX, Section 1.4, of the Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club Bylaws, the president, with approval of the board of directors, appoints an auditor to audit the Club financial records to determine that proper procedures have been followed. A written report is required from the auditor within 30 days of the close of the calendar year. For the year ending December 31, 2025 president Mark Koehler (W2MWK), with the approval of the board of directors, appointed Gary Martinez (N6UWQ) David McBrayer (N6OJJ) and Earl Wilson (K6GPB) to perform the required annual audit. The Treasurer Ron Holland (KA6UAI) and Laurie Holland submitted records for the audit. This audit is of those records submitted.

FINDINGS:

The Club maintains its records on the cash basis — revenue is recorded at the time it is received and expenditures at the time a check is written rather than at the time of obligation. There are two checking accounts with Wells Fargo where all the funds received are deposited, and most expenditures made by check. The balances of these accounts are:

General fund beginning balance January 1, 2025:	\$ 29,811.80
General fund ending balance December 31, 2025:	\$ 29,818.12
Repeater fund beginning balance January 1, 2025:	\$ 6,984.55
Repeater fund ending balance December 31, 2025:	\$ 7,792.55

A sample review of some of the revenue and expenditures found were being timely recorded. These were compared with the bank statements and found to be accurate.

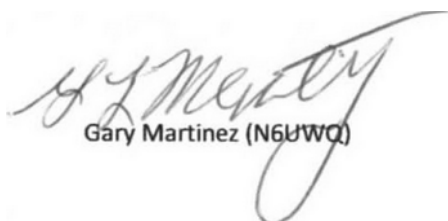
RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Article XI, Section 9 provides for special club accounts. One is the repeater fund that has its own account. We understand that this account is being merged into the General fund, leaving the repeater income and expenses as a line item there. We also understand that the special account will be retained for the scholarship fund. We did not find appropriate documentation for either of these approved changes, nor a point where the Repeater funds were noted as moved to the General fund and that a Scholarship fund is now identified.

2. Recommended last year was to obtain Club software accounting system rather than the existing one that is maintained by hand. It is noted that dues are now paid electronically and a software system is being implemented. Suggest identifying the name of this software system with its associated costs.

The Club appears to be in a financially healthy position with its current activities. We are pleased to be able to submit this report and can answer any question you might have.

Respectively Submitted,



Gary Martinez (N6UWQ)



David McBrayer (N6OJJ)



Earl Wilson (K6GPB)

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

SFARC Secretary | Bob Patton (N6EMS)

April 10, 2026, at 1930 till 2100 Hrs

Placer County HHS Conference Center

The meeting was called to order by Mark (W2MWK) at 1930 hrs

Visitors were welcomed and special mention was given to Max (KO6NEZ) for passing his Technician exam and obtaining his license with the SFARC VE group.

No reports from club officers

There was an update from the VE team from the April 6th session. 1 new Technician, 1 General upgrade and 4 Extra upgrades.

There was a brief discussion of membership. The non-current members have been removed from the active role in HamClubOnline. Please go check if you are current with your dues. The club is still growing.

The financial review team completed it's audit of last years financials and submitted it's report to the board. Two items were recommended and have been acted on by the board. The repeater fund was moved back into the general fund and the scholarship fund was broken out to it's own account to facilitate better financial tracking. Motion to accept the report and recommendations was put forward by Allen (KB4GOJ) and seconded by Frank (KG9M). Vote will be online.

Frank (KG9M) this year's chair for Hamfest gave a post event wrap up report to the group. Preliminary figures indicate that it was an overwhelming success with overall profit of \$2624. and \$4422. being raised for the scholarship fund. A big thank you was given to all the volunteers who made the event happen.

There was a brief update on the Mesh Core project that is being headed up by Jeff (N5JEF). SFARC is a sponsoring club with no financial commitments, and Jeff has worked with other clubs to submit a grant proposal.

The club has awarded three scholarships to family members of club members. Emily Smith, Taylor Foley, and Indiana Oren were the first three recipients of the \$1000.00 SFARC scholarship. The program has now moved forward to seek candidates at four local high schools: Placer HS, Del Oro HS, Colfax HS, and Bear River HS. More awards will be coming.

There was a report to the membership on board discussions about nets held on the repeater. The board wanted to establish the distinction between nets that the club operates and ones that members have requested time for and they operate. Currently the "Coffee Break Net" is the only net operated by the club. The board has decided to expand the list of club operated nets to include the Thursday night club net to ensure continuity. The board put forward a preamble and post net script for use that will clearly identify the net sponsor.

There was a brief presentation to the group by Smitty (WB1G) on the need for PA/Sound system for use at events. Costs were discussed and motion was put forward by Scott (KM6RFB) to authorize \$1000.00 for the purchase of new equipment. The motion was seconded by Jim (WA8MPA). Vote will be online.

Jim (WA8MPA) gave a presentation on common mode current. The presentation was recorded and will be available on-line (YouTube).

There was a recap of upcoming events and announcements.

The drawing was held and Joe (KD6HON) received a \$25 HRO gift card and Tim (W6YGO) received a linear power supply.

The meeting was closed at 2100 Hrs.

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