



Radio-Active!

September 13, 2026, Volume 5 Issue 9

Redwoods, Runners & Radio in Action!

The trails at Roaring Camp Railroads and Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park burst to life on August 16th as runners charged through the towering trees for the 56th annual Race Through the Redwoods Foot Race. Sponsored by the Felton Business Association, this beloved community tradition brings energy, teamwork, and plenty of redwood-country spirit to Felton. Proceeds help fund local favorites such as the Memorial Day Parade, the Tree Lighting, and other civic events, while also supporting a variety of local charities.

Twenty ARES members helped keep the excitement moving by staffing positions along the course and supporting clear communications throughout the event. Cross-band repeating gave the team stronger reach from the field back to net control, helping everyone stay connected among the redwoods. After the final runners crossed the line, participants and volunteers were rewarded with a freshly cooked pancake breakfast courtesy of the Zayante Fire Department. Want a runner's-eye view of the fun? [Watch the quick race video](#). Can you spot the ARES member?

Want to be part of the fun next time? Join the volunteer team at next year's race and help keep this exciting community tradition running strong.

Pictures continued on next page.



Morning briefing



Kathy, KD6SEI & Tom, KO6BTX



Donna, KN6SYS

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Santa Cruz County ARES Purpose

- The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment with their local ARES leadership for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes.
- We are not fire fighters or police or sheriff's officers. We are volunteers who care about our communities by using our emergency communication skills.
- Before volunteering in an emergency, we first take care of ourselves, our family, and our home.
- We value every member's contribution, irrespective of license class, years of experience, or the price tag of equipment.



Stephan, KM6NEP



Kathy, KE6VTY & Bob, KO6XX



Nancy, KG6HDP & Steve, KN6DBX



Rob, KM6YHC



John, KJ6WKT



Roberta, AJ6KN



Dill, AK6SV & JR, KK7VNL

Report your volunteer hours!

ARES volunteers reported **612 hours in August**, highlighting our continued commitment to training, preparedness, and community service.

Reporting your hours does more than track activity—it demonstrates to county public safety managers that ARES is active, dependable, and ready to serve when needed. Logged volunteer time helps maintain our visibility and reinforces the value of amateur radio in emergency response. Please remember to report all ARES and ham radio-related activities, no matter how small.

Enter your hours here: <https://xczcomm.com/index.php/hours-reporting/>
Every hour tells our story. Let us keep it visible.

NEP Communications exercise planned

Get ready to jump on the air! The next Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness (NEP) communications exercise is scheduled for Sunday, October 4th at 7pm, and it is a great chance to practice, connect, and be part of a growing countywide effort. This every-other-month exercise is gaining momentum, with more neighborhoods eager to join in and see how Ham and MURS radios can help keep communities connected when it matters most.

At the start of the exercise, test-message bulletins will be announced several times on three repeaters: WR6AOK, K6BJ, and W6TUW. Ham radio operators then report back with neighborhood tallies showing how many messages were received. Whether you are brand new, brushing up your skills, or ready to help lead the way, this is an easy, practical, and rewarding way to get on the air and support neighborhood preparedness. Join in, make a few contacts, and help show how strong our local radio network can be!

Act by Sept 30 for email survey!

Time is running out—please take a moment now to complete the ARES email survey by September 30th! Your response helps us keep communications reliable, current, and easy for every member to receive as we move our email distribution list to Google Groups. This upgrade will improve message delivery, simplify list management, and help eliminate the certificate-related issues some members have experienced with the current system. To stay on the distribution list, we need to confirm that you still want to receive ARES messages and that your email address is up to date. If you missed the survey or accidentally deleted it, no problem—use this link today: [Complete the email survey](#).

Hands-On Radio Fun at This Month's Meeting!

Get ready to build, learn, and swap ideas! Join us for this month's membership meeting on September 16th at 7pm at the Emergency Operations Center for a lively, hands-on cable build party featuring Anderson Powerpoles. You will also get a close-up look at radio go-bags, pick up practical tips, and see how members prepare their gear for events and emergencies. Whether you are curious, new to the hobby, or ready to share what works in your own kit, this is a great night to jump in and be part of the fun.

Resources

- Website: <https://xczcomm.com/>
- Reporting volunteer hours: <https://xczcomm.com/index.php/hours-reporting/>
- Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ARES-of-Santa-Cruz-County-Ca-296232310799866>
- Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/431308973875528>
- PIO Articles: <https://arrlsantaclara.org/news/> or <https://xczcomm.com/index.php/news/>
- Submitting personal information such as DSW application, personal data update, education certificates, PDFs of deployment documents: email to EOC.ARES@santacruzca.gov
- Santa Cruz Communications Support offers four loaner kits for ham operators: two for vehicle deployment (mobile dual-band radio, mag mount antenna, battery, kneeboard) and two for stationary outdoor use (vehicle kit plus tripod antenna, lighting, and pop-up). To borrow a kit, contact John (N6QX), Roberta (AJ6KN), Stephen (KM6NEP), or Dan (N6RJX).

Cross-Band Repeating: A Bigger Voice for Your HT

Cross-band repeating is one of those handy radio tools that can turn a small handheld into a much more useful field communications setup. In simple terms, a dual-band radio listens to one amateur band and automatically retransmits the signal on another. A common arrangement is UHF in and VHF out, such as receiving on 70 cm and retransmitting on 2 meters, with the reverse path used for return traffic.

Imagine you are out on foot with an HT and need to reach farther than the handheld can manage on its own:

1. Your HT transmits on a UHF frequency.
2. Your vehicle's mobile radio, parked in a better location, receives that signal.
3. The mobile radio immediately retransmits it on a VHF frequency.
4. That stronger signal reaches a distant repeater or another station.

The result is simple but powerful: your mobile radio becomes a bridge between bands, giving your handheld a bigger voice when terrain, distance, or low power would otherwise get in the way.

The main benefit is range extension. A low-power HT may not reach a distant repeater directly, but it can often reach a vehicle on a hilltop, ridge, parking area, or other favorable location. From there, the higher-power mobile radio carries the signal much farther.

That makes cross-band repeating especially useful for:

- Hiking and camping
- Public service events
- Emergency communications
- Extending handheld coverage in rural or mountainous areas

Unlike a traditional repeater, which usually receives and transmits within the same band, a cross-band setup uses different bands for input and output. That band separation is what lets a mobile radio act as a practical relay between your handheld and the wider radio network.

A typical setup is HT ↔ Mobile radio (UHF) and Mobile radio ↔ Local repeater (VHF). This lets an operator move around with a compact handheld while taking advantage of the reach, antenna height, and power of the mobile station. As useful as cross-band repeat can be, it should be used thoughtfully. The mobile radio may transmit often, which can increase battery draw and heat. Operators should use tones such as CTCSS or DCS when appropriate, monitor the system, identify properly, and avoid interference or unintended retransmissions.



Dan, N6RJX, put cross-band repeating to work at the Race Through the Redwoods with a field setup that helped extend communications along the course. This year, the mast carried an extra bonus: a MeshCore repeater (not Ham)!

New Section Chief in Town!

Submitted by Allison, KM6RMN, XCZ ARES PIO

As of July 1, Tony Dowler, K6BV, has taken the reins as ARRL Santa Clara Valley (SCV) Section manager. He succeeds James Armstrong, NV6W, who stepped down after six years of excellent service. Tony earned his Amateur Extra class license over 25 years ago. His Amateur Radio activities include HF operations and DXing. He has been the SCV Affiliated Club Coordinator (ACC), a past president of the Northern California DX Club and the San Francisco Radio Club. He lives in Pacifica with his wife of 44 years; Karen, KM6IMD. Welcome, Tony!

Some readers here may need a refresher on what this all means. As ARES volunteers, we are part of a program sponsored and administered by American Radio Relay League (ARRL) to provide trained emergency communications support to local communities during disasters. ARRL administration is distributed geographically in 15 territories called Divisions. Each of these are subdivided into administrative Sections, 71 of them in all. Santa Cruz County ARES is included in the Santa Clara Valley (SCV) section of the Pacific Division (Northern California and Nevada). The SCV Section includes Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Benito, Santa Clara, and San Mateo counties. Our people are active, and you can read all about our activities in the Division and Section newsletters. If you are an ARRL member and would like to subscribe, you can do so through the ARRL website. Manage all your ARRL e-newsletters and notifications at www.arrl.org/opt-in-out.

Tony has a web page: k6bv.net. Take a few moments to check it out and see his new antenna! You can contact him directly at k6bv@arrl.org.



Tony, K6BV



2026 ARES in Action!

Volunteer, connect, serve, make every event count.

Mark your calendar • Bring your radio • Be part of the excitement

Featured Events

Sunday, SEP 27 Santa Cruz Triathlon	ARES supports participant position monitoring and safety communications for organizers. Sign Up Here
Friday, OCT 23 Halloween Trunk or Treat	Approx. 1530–2030 • 5200 Soquel Ave, Santa Cruz ARES assists with participant monitoring, closed-road staffing, and shuttle parking communications.
Sunday, OCT 25 Santa Cruz Marathon	Inaugural event ARES supports participant position monitoring and safety communications for organizers
Each Wednesday Loft Coffee	10AM – 12PM • 2701 Cabrillo College, Aptos Share ideas, get Elmer help, and connect with local operators.
2nd/4th Saturday C.A.K.E. at Loft Coffee	10AM • 2701 Cabrillo College, Aptos C.A.K.E. = Coffee assisted knowledge exchange. Meet up, share ideas, ask questions, and learn from local operators.
1st Saturday POTA	10AM • Various locations around the county Bring your gear for relaxed park radio activity and on-air practice.
3rd Saturday SCCARC Swap Meet	8AM • 501 Upper Park Rd, Santa Cruz Clear out your shack, find one-of-a-kind radio treasures, or come shop for your next great discovery.

Choose an event, bring your radio, and jump into the action with Santa Cruz County ARES.

Show up. Tune in. Make a difference.

Class Is Coming Fast — Seats Are Filling!

EXPLORE. CONNECT. MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

FREE HAM RADIO CLASS FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS & TEACHERS!

TECHNOLOGY • FRIENDS • ADVENTURE • COMMUNITY

EARN YOUR FCC AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE IN JUST 7 WEEKS!

Join other students and discover the exciting world of amateur radio! Learn real-world skills, build confidence, and connect with people around your community—and around the world!



ROBOTICS & AI
See robots in action
and learn about
artificial intelligence.



ELECTRONICS
Hands-on fun with
circuits, components,
and soldering.



RADIO & SATELLITES
Talk through satellites
and explore how
radio waves work.



**EMERGENCY
COMMUNICATIONS**
Learn how hams
help in disasters
and emergencies.



**3D PRINTING &
MAKING THINGS**
Design, build, and
bring your ideas
to life!



MEET BEZAELE!

Our classroom robot
who loves to teach
and inspire.



AND WINK!
Everyone's
favorite
little robot.

SPECIAL YOUTH OPPORTUNITY!



Students 16 years old and younger
who pass the Technician exam
receive a **FREE** handheld
amateur radio!



CLASS DETAILS



WHEN: Thursdays, 10/15/26 – 11/19/26
7:00 – 9:00 pm
Followed by “Now What Do I Do?”
on 12/10/26



WHERE: Santa Cruz County Emergency
Operations Center (EOC)
5200 Soquel Avenue, Santa Cruz



TESTING: Saturday, 12/5/26
1:00 – 3:00 pm at the EOC



INSTRUCTORS: Bob Fike, KO6XX
Dan N6RJX, Kathi KE6VTY,
Roberta AJ6KN

NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED – WE START FROM SCRATCH!

WHY JOIN?

- ✓ Learn real technology and useful skills
- ✓ Make new friends and have fun
- ✓ Discover exciting hobbies and careers
- ✓ Help your community in times of need
- ✓ Join a global community of
over 3 million hams

**PERFECT FOR
STUDENTS IN
7TH GRADE AND UP!**

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Gordon West Ham Radio License
Manual – Technician
<http://tiny.cc/GWTechnicianManual2026>
- Free online study tool:
<https://hamstudy.org/>
- Enthusiasm & curiosity!
We'll provide the rest.

HOW TO REGISTER



Scan the QR code or visit
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/hamfallclass2026>
Limited to 25 students – register early!



TEACHERS!

Please share this flyer
with your students!



Come for the knowledge.
Stay for the community.
Make a difference.

QUESTIONS?

Email Roberta Roberts, AJ6KN (Admin):
roberta@silvares.org
Bob's email: bob.ko6xx@gmail.com



STRONG SIGNALS. STRONGER COMMUNITY. YOUR ADVENTURE STARTS HERE!

