



RADIO-ACTIVE!

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Operator Spotlight

Mike, K9VF is one of a handful of our ARES members who were raised outside of the United States. He grew up in Barcelona, Spain and is fluent in Spanish and a local dialect, Catalan. Barcelona, the cosmopolitan capital of Spain's Catalonia region, is known for its art and architecture. Growing up included some favorite family hiking outings in the Pyrenees, a mountain range straddling the border of France and Spain. Hobbies include going on hikes or bike rides to discover new places, tinker with electronics and software and taking to the skies with aviation and flying.



College took Mike to Manchester, England to study at Salford University, majoring in Aeronautical Engineering. But his career quickly took him down the path towards electronics, software, and radio/wireless communications, and it has been the center of many different jobs and projects since then.

Since 1993, Mike has been involved with emergency services in one way or another. He started by joining the local volunteer Mountain Rescue team in the Peak District (UK), and then became a volunteer firefighter in Barcelona, which he did for 23 years. For his professional side, Mike has worked for several public safety organizations, including the fire service. The experience Mike gained working for the fire department's radio communications unit included a lot of hands-on practical experience with e.g. building RF cables with many different connector types, electrical work, installing radio & comms equipment in various vehicles. Continued on Page 3



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Starts this week!

New Ham Radio Technician License Study Group!

Do you have friends envious of your ability to talk on the radio and get information and want to learn about Ham radio? If so, we have a class for them to review the test study materials and prepare to take the exam. The study group begins Thursday, April 17th from 7:00 to 9:00pm and runs for 6 weeks at the Emergency Operations Center. Encourage your friends to sign-up soon.

Sign-up link: <https://tinyurl.com/35avzt57>

Sign-up QR code:



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 contributions, irrespective of license class, years of experience, or the price tag of equipment.

Ham Radio's Motto

"When all else fails – ham radio works". That is because, when all the normal communication systems stop working, Ham Radio is still in operation, helping people, conveying messages, and sometimes, even saving lives.

Found On the Web

Allison, KM6RMN, Public Information Officer



This month I'll be revisiting the ARRL website, sort of, to call attention to their newest service for all of us perpetual students. And I've thrown in an extra resource for the Elmers and facilitators among us, considering Santa Cruz ARES' renewed interest in working with CERT and neighborhood groups.

The Learning Center

Reading over a backlog of ARRL newsletters, I was reminded of the new learning opportunities being offered by ARRL. Always on the lookout for this kind of thing, I checked it out.

The offerings are grouped under a new service found under ARRL's umbrella, called *The Learning Center*. Technically, it isn't officially on ARRL's website, but you can find your way to it by logging in and making a few mouse-clicks. Once you've steered your way through the not-so-clear pathway to the access portal, you'll find yourself with a choice of study courses, activities and video tutorials. It takes a few steps to initially access *The Learning Center*. Start by visit-

ing www.arrl.org and clicking on **Licensing, Education, and Training**. Scroll down to **Popular Education Links** and select **Learning Center**. Note that you'll need to create new login credentials to access the platform directly since it operates separately from ARRL's main website.

Once your login is registered, you'll find a variety of courses and podcasts tailored to different interests. You'll only see a few offerings at first; but click "view all" and it will reveal several pages of courses and podcasts to choose from. You can also use filters under the Browse button to explore topics such as education, electronics, emergency communications, podcasts, and webinars. Click on a course to view detailed information about its content. To enroll in a course, click the registration link at the top of its page. You can tackle a course or webinar at your own pace. If you leave off in the middle, returning to the portal is straightforward. Visit <https://learn.arrl.org>. You'll find a new section on the page, tracking your progress in selected courses. This feature ensures you can easily pick up where you left off.

- ▶ www.arrl.org -to click through and register
- ▶ <https://learn.arrl.org> -to access when registered

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Equipment available to loan

Santa Cruz Communications Support have made **FOUR** kits available for loaning to allow ham operators participate in a deployment or to trial a different setup. Two kits are for a vehicle deployment and includes mobile dual-band radio, mag mount antenna, battery and kneeboard. The other two kits are for stationary outdoor deployments and includes the vehicle kit with additional supplies of a tripod antenna, lighting, and pop-up. Contact either John, N6QX, Roberta, AJ6KN, Stephen, KM6NEP or Gary, K6PDL for arraiging for check out.

Operator Spotlight—Continued

Mike has played with radios since he was a young kid, and radio communications have been in his life since - however he never got around getting a ham radio license. Moving to the US, and finding a lot of hams in his new life and surroundings prompted him to study, get his license in 2024 and achieving amateur extra classification. He expects joining ARES would be a great way to contribute to the community and further perfect his radio skills. Playing with new equipment and antennas, learning about new things like advanced digital modes are aspects of the hobby he currently finds enjoyable. In the next year, Mike wants to learn as much as he can about operating procedures, processes, and contribute as much as possible to activities and training.

Wide and shallow in knowledge is how Mike considers himself - meaning, he is a generalist rather than a specialist. And one of his favorite sayings matches his drive for learning, "Proceed until apprehended" - quote from Simon Worden, former head of NASA Ames, as a way to express breaking through problems and barriers to achieve a goal.

Recently, Mike offered his Spanish speaking skills at a tabling event in Pajaro regarding Wildfire Preparedness. Mike is married with two school age children living in the Loma Prieta area of the county. Benvingut a l'ARES, Mike.



Report your volunteer hours!

The reported volunteer hours for March was 556 hours. Please remember to enter your hours on the form on <https://xczcomm.com/index.php/hours-reporting/>

Reporting the time you spend on ARES and ham radio activities reminds county public safety managers that we're around and ready to serve in time of need.

Found On the Web—Continued

CERT Radio Response Guide

One of our planned agenda items for Wednesday's ARES meeting will be discussion about working with Santa Cruz County Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). This prompted me to do a little digging around the internet for similar partnerships, and I stumbled across this gem. For the instructors and planners among us, the CERT Radio Response Guide, developed by Eugene, Oregon's CERT community, could serve as a template for planning our own joint ventures, offering detailed instructions on pre-disaster preparations, field communication protocols, and essential tools for radio operators. Key sections of the guide include creating personal Radio Response Go-Kits, setting up Incident Command Posts (ICPs), and maintaining communication readiness. It also provides practical resources such as checklists, maps, and ICS forms to streamline operations during emergencies. We can use this document to model our own project materials, ranging from CERT-ARES field guides to instructions for neighborhood MURS operations. The creators expressed willingness to share, saying some of their own material was borrowed from other CERT groups, so borrowing bits and tailoring for our own guides shouldn't be a problem.

- ▶ https://eugeneemcomm.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/2021_CERT-Radio-Response-Guide-Final.pdf
- ▶ Shortened URL: <https://tinyurl.com/CERT-radio>

If you know a cool website, podcast, YouTube series, phone app or online tool, send me a heads-up at KM6RMN@SLVARES.org. I'll check it out and pass it on in a future *Found On The Web* article.

Resources

- Website: <https://xczcomm.com/>
- Reporting volunteer hours: <https://xczcomm.com/index.php/hours-reporting/>
- Upcoming events: <https://xczcomm.com/index.php/calendar-of-events/>
- Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ARES-of-Santa-Cruz-County-Ca-296232310799866>
- Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/431308973875528>
- PIO Articles: <https://arrlsantaclaravalley.org/news/> or <https://xczcomm.com/index.php/news/>
- XCZ Comm You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHZH8TUSgh4SqHTPXSWolPA>
- Submitting deployment documents: send in PDF form to EOC.ARES@santacruzca.gov
- Submitting personal information such as DSW application, personal data update, education certificates: email K6PDL@ARRL.net, and EOC.ARES@santacruzca.gov

2025 SCC ARES Events

Date	Event	Approx. or confirmed date?	Description
May 18, 2025	Strawberry Fields Forever Bike Ride	Confirmed	Strawberry Fields Forever is an annual benefit bike ride through some of the most beautiful regions of Santa Cruz County. ARES provides comms between rest stops and SAG vehicles. SIGN UP: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4DA9A822A4F4CE9-55605787-strawberry
June 23 - 27, 2025	Santa Cruz Regional Active Shooter and Casualty Care Response Training	Confirmed	This event is sponsored by the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's department and provides first responder training for an active shooter. ARES along with CERT provides perimeter monitoring in maintaining a closed event location.
July 4, 2025	Aptos 4th of July Parade	Approximate	We provide monitoring of the public to provide information to the Sheriffs
8/17/2025 (est)	Race through the Redwoods	Approximate	Race through the Redwoods is a 10K foot race that starts and finishes at Roaring Camp but the majority traverses the redwoods in Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park. It is promoted by the Felton Business and Community Association. ARES provides monitoring of runners positions and safety for the organizers.
9/21/2025 (est)	Santa Cruz Triathlon	Approximate	Santa Cruz Triathlon is a non-profit that donates proceeds to various athletic programs in the county. ARES provides monitoring of participants positions and safety for the organizers.
October 31, 2025 (est) 1530 - 2000	Halloween Trunk or Treat 5200 Soquel Ave, Santa Cruz	Approximate	Trunk of Treat is organized by the Santa Cruz Sheriffs. ARES provides monitoring of participants along with closed road staffing and shuttle parking location.

2025 Other Radio Events for Ham Operator Participation

Date	Event	Approx. or confirmed date?	Description
Each Wednesday 10am - 12pm	Loft Coffee 2701 Cabrillo College Dr, Aptos		Gathering of general interest, sharing of ideas, getting some elmer help
2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month 10am	C.A.K.E. @ Loft Coffee 2701 Cabrillo College Dr, Aptos		C.A.K.E. = Coffee/Caffeine Assisted Knowledge Exchange. Gathering of general interest, sharing of ideas, getting some elmer help
1st Saturday of each month [5/3/25, 6/7/25, 7/5/25, 8/2/25, 9/6/25, 10/4/25, 11/1/25, 12/6/25] 10am - 2pm	POTA	Approximate	Play radio at a scenic park near by. Not formal and any mode can be used. Emails sent prior to event to indicate the specific park. Prior parks have been Seacliff State Park and Wilder State Park
April 27, 2025	Big Sur International Marathon	Confirmed	Point to Point foot race/run along Highway 1 from Big Sur to Carmel. Ham radio operators provide communications along the route.
June 28-29, 2025	ARRL Field Day	Confirmed	A national activity promoted by ARRL to share all the various aspects of the Ham Radio. Often hosted by both radio clubs of the Santa Cruz County. More information to be shared at a later date.