



Santa Cruz County ARES Membership Meeting Minutes



Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 1900;

In-person at the Emergency Operations Center, 5200 Soquel Avenue

Welcome

John N6QX

Introduction of New Members

Bob KO6XX (bob@slvares.org)

- Three new members were introduced.

Upcoming Activities

All

- Equine Evac Radio exercise March 15th 08:30 – 12:00 <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/EERadio2026>
- Repeat Communications Test - TBD

Emergency Communication Plans at UCSC

Stephan Edgar (sedgar@ucsc.edu)

- Stephan is the Strategic Resilience and Preparedness Manager at UCSC. He provided an overview of his role and what his goals are. His focus is breaking down silos that are present. They are currently finalizing an update for the emergency operations plan for UCSC. He wants to include a broader reach beyond the campus with groups such as ARES for communications.

Successful Emergency Communications Test Between EOC and Neighborhood Groups

John N6QX

Roberta AJ6KN (AJ6KN@slvares.org)

- A recap of the test was provided with 29 groups reporting in and greater than 240 individuals. It was impressive the number of participants. There were some radio challenges at the EOC. The radios were locking up when both radios were transmitting. Most likely they were desensing each other. Some actions, such as added ferrite filters have already been put into place to minimize. The upcoming Wednesday net is going to test to see if the issue has been resolved with John and Roberta acting as two net controls.
- We have been mapping all the Firewise and organized neighborhoods along with the Ham radio operators known in the area. The map currently is restricted access but perhaps consider a more public version. There was a prior agreement with Firewise contacts not to make their contact information widely known.

Lessons learned – Power supply outage / listening on the reverse

Roberta AJ6KN (AJ6KN@slvares.org)

JoMarie KM6URE


- A recap of how a challenging net occurred recently and lessons learned. See powerpoint. It brought to light that things can go wrong for experienced operators and how to learn from them.

Net Control Recruitment

Roberta AJ6KN (AJ6KN@slvares.org)

Wed NET Date	ARES Repeater	Repeater NET Controller
Feb 25	K6BJ	Roberta, AJ6KN and John, N6QX
Mar 4	K6BJ	Roberta, AJ6KN and John, N6QX
Mar 11	K6BJ	John, N6QX
Mar 25	K6BJ	Ed, N6EMA
Apr 1	WR6AOK	Bruce, KN6DBR

Next meeting March 18 at 1900



Power Supplies and the Reverse

A tale to tell

JoMarie, KM6URE and Roberta, AJ6KN

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Net Control Operations 1/28/26

- Started on WR6AOK by KM6URE
 - In progress with check-ins and radio went dark
 - Listeners heard three beeps and then silence



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Net Control Operations 1/28/26

- What next?
 - Deer in headlights
 - No quick change to another radio
 - Texted AJ6KN to take over
 - Power issue but house ok
 - Radio black but power supply on
 - Concluded it was wires between radio and power supply.
 - Fuses ok
 - Culprit?

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Culprit!

- Wire pulled out



4

Alternative power available?

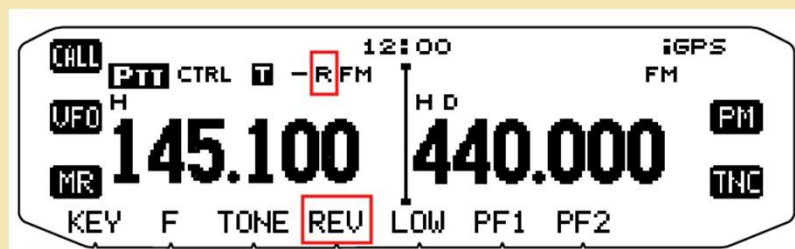
- Yes
- How easy to change?



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Net Control Operations 1/28/26

- AJ6KN proceeded with check-ins and exercise, Repeater hop to W6TUV
- W6TUV challenging with circuit merit 3 or less
 - Required use of Reverse



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Using the Reverse

Visual Indicators on the Display

Most modern handheld (HT) and mobile radios have a specific indicator for reverse mode.

- **The "R" Icon:** Many radios (like Baofeng, Kenwood, Yaesu) will display a small letter "R" on the screen when reverse is active.
- **Frequency Check:** Toggle the reverse button (often the * or SCAN button on HTs). If you see the frequency change from the output frequency (e.g., 146.940) to the input frequency (e.g., 146.340), you are in reverse.
- **"-" or "+" Shift Change:** If your radio shows the offset direction (like -600), activating reverse may make the shift indicator disappear, change to a different sign, or flash, indicating you are listening to the input, not the output.

Audio/Signal Cues

- **Loss of Repeater Tail:** When you unkey, you typically hear a "courtesy beep," "kerchunk," or "squelch tail" from the repeater. If you are in reverse, you will likely **not** hear this, or it will be much quieter/noisier.
- **"Simplex" Audio Sound:** The audio may sound different—more like a direct radio-to-radio signal (higher noise floor, less "processed" sound) rather than the clean, strong audio of a repeater.
- **Hearing Only One Side:** If you are in a conversation and you can only hear one person (the one closer to you) but not the other person or the repeater controller, you are likely listening to the input frequency.