



Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System

NEWSLETTER

WINTER, 2022-2023 - PUBLISHED BY REGULAR
PEOPLE ON AN IRREGULAR BASIS

ANNOUNCING: The SPECS 2023 Annual Meeting

Date: Saturday, January 14, 2023
Time: 8:30 A.M. Social time, 9:00 A.M. Meeting begins
Speaker: To be announced
Topic: To be announced

THIS NEWSLETTER IS THE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2023 SPECS ANNUAL MEETING and ELECTION of OFFICERS

Election of SPECS Officers

- The slate of officers is the selection of the nominating committee and will be voted on by the membership at the annual meeting.
- Additional nominees will be solicited from the floor before the vote.
- Rosenberg's Rules of Order will be followed during the voting.
- **You must be a paid up member of SPECS in order to vote.**

SPECS Slate of Officers for 2023

There are two slates – one is for the current Bylaws and the other is for the proposed new Bylaws. Under the new Bylaws there are fewer positions to fill.

Both slates are posted on the SPECSnet.org website [meeting page](#).

This meeting is in-person with masks. There will be no food or drink allowed (not even water). You can also attend virtually via the zoom link below.

The main business items are the election of officers for 2023 and a vote on adoption of the revised Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. These are available for your review on the SPECSnet.org website [meeting page](#).

Zoom link for meeting: <https://rebrand.ly/specs-meeting>



Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System

P.O. Box 1491, Mountain View, CA 94042

Email: info@SPECSNet.org • Web: www.specsnet.org



Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System

SPECS Membership Renewal

Join SPECSUG or renew your membership for 2023 at www.specsnet.org or mail a five dollar check with your contact information and Call Sign to SPECS, PO Box 1491, Mountain View CA 94042

You can also join or renew by mailing payment with the form on the website.

Featured Presentation To be determined

An Abstract will be available soon, and will be posted on the website.

Message from SPECS President

Grant Elliot, KK6FMQ

Because we dealt with COVID for three of the last four years, my term as President has not been what I envisioned when taking the job. 2019 was business as usual, but then 2020 came along bringing with it COVID-19 and upsetting the apple cart – in a very big way. However, we have survived and are continuing down the road moving back toward something more “normal.” Our upcoming Annual Meeting will be an in-person event and we look forward to having more in-person activities in 2023. (However, a zoom link is provided above for those who prefer that.)

The highlight of the year was the successful move of the W6ASH repeaters with their antennas into the new pavilion at El Camino Hospital. As you are all aware by now, they are fully operational on all three frequencies. Supporting the Repeater

Association and being able to use these repeaters for emergency communications is our “raison de etre.”

The Board spent a lot of energy this year on extensively revising our Bylaws. The ability of the Board to function effectively in an environment with no Electronic Flea Market providing capital for our operations and with the continuing difficulty finding volunteers to serve prompted a hard look at our current Bylaws and their deficiencies. We wanted to find ways to make the Board more flexible for the future and more consistent with California’s Corporations Code. I think our Proposed New Bylaws accomplish that. Please review them with care and see if you agree.

Treasurer’s Comments

Neil Katin K2LL, acting for Jim Weatherford, WU6K



Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System

P.O. Box 1491, Mountain View, CA 94042

Email: info@SPECSNet.org • Web: www.specsnet.org



Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System

Our financial situation is substantially the same as last year, since our major expense (annual meeting food/drink) and income (flea market) did not occur.

Our assets are \$37,214.80, approximately equal to last year. Our main expenses were D&O insurance (\$200), web site and domain (\$166.05), our share of our post office box (\$91), and tax filings (\$85). We had \$345 gross membership fee income this calendar year and \$30.43 in transaction fees, for a net income of \$314.57.

Our assets are held in two Bank of America checking accounts (\$15,572.07 and \$4710.11), 2 B of A CDs (10,364.80 and 5177.80), and \$1390.02 at Paypal (1390.02).

We currently have 21 paid members. 80 people have not yet renewed for 2023. We also have two new members.

Secretary's Comments

Leslie Grimm KK6EKN

The SPECS Users Group board held all its meetings via Zoom, due to pandemic precautions. There were several changes this year, which ultimately led to a need to restructure the board and change the Bylaws. One change was the loss of the flea market (a major fund-raising venue for our group), and hence no need for a board position to manage that. We also implemented a new training strategy, with the Training Officer announcing upcoming trainings on the Main Net and by weekly E-mails to SPECS members. Another change was to include

check-in counts of the NASA AMES group on our Monday Night check-ins. Most of the meetings from July on were focused on revisions to the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws, to give the board more flexibility in conducting its business.

SPECS Repeater Association

*Peter Griffith, WA6VAQ Scott Overstreet, N6NXI
Dave Platt, AE6EO, Keith Amidon, KJ6PUO, Jim
Abraham, W6EB (SK), Phil Hawkins, KA6MZE*

The Big Repeater Move of 2022

It Is Done! (Well, mostly so).

We first learned that the El Camino Old Hospital building would eventually be demolished ten years ago. We began planning for the move to the new Sobrato Pavilion five or six years ago. But then, almost three years ago, COVID-19 threw a monkey wrench into everybody's schedules. Now, about nine months after we started active work on the move, the W6ASH repeater system is "up and running" in its new home! The new installation includes all new antennas, new feed-lines and grounding (professionally installed), and a new power connection to the hospital's generator-backed power grid.

It's been a very busy year! Back in 2018 and 2019 we'd walked the site several times, worked with the hospital staff to figure out where the repeater and antennas should be placed, identified the feed-line and other material which would be needed and drafted a Bill of Materials. Everything was put



Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System

P.O. Box 1491, Mountain View, CA 94042

Email: info@SPECSNet.org • Web: www.specsnet.org



Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System

on hold when the COVID-19 lock-downs were announced, so we stood by awaiting word from the hospital that we could move ahead.

December 2021 - the hospital staff agreed that it's time to start actively planning the move - "let's meet after the holidays and review the plan."

January 2022 - things suddenly went to "Oh, the Old Hospital will be demolished starting next month, so we need to get going on this immediately." We revisited the planning we'd done prior to the COVID-19 lock-down and confirmed that it all looked good.

March 2022 - we learned that the heliax feed-line we'd proposed using was out-of-stock everywhere, with no estimated availability date. We developed a two-phase "Plan B", to install smaller and more-readily-available half-inch heliax in a first phase, and consider installing heavier-gauge heliax later if needed.

May 2022 - we learned that the contractor couldn't acquire the half-inch heliax in less than 1000-foot spools, which would result in an extremely expensive and wasteful installation. We started looking for alternate sources. Scott N6NXI then offered to donate some new-old-stock half-inch heliax of his own, and Dave AE6EO offered to donate unused LMR-400 coax for the remote base. The hospital staff approved the installation work.

July 2022 - due to contractor scheduling issues, the feed-line and antenna installation was delayed until after the last possible "drop-dead" date for

the repeater move. We switched operation of W6ASH to off-site backup repeaters, shut down the hospital repeaters and partially disassembled the equipment from the cabinet. The day before power was scheduled to be cut off, a team of intrepid and well-dressed SPECS volunteers ascended the "demolition lift" on the side of the Old Hospital building, carried all of the repeater equipment down to the ground, and moved it over to the Sobrato Pavilion and up into the penthouse. Everything arrived safely, the cabinet was reassembled and the repeater controller was powered up on standby. The antennas from the Old Hospital installation were salvaged and placed in storage for possible re-use.

September 2022 - the contractor installed the new feed-lines and grounding bar (beautifully done), installed mounting masts on the Sobrato Pavilion roof, mounted and connected the new antennas, and performed electrical checks. Finally, the 220 repeater was activated (it had no off-site backup). AE6EO then left town for a month.

October 2022 - AE6EO returned. The 2-meter and 440 repeaters were activated, tested, and placed into service, with the off-site backup repeaters placed in stand-by.

November 2022 - a problem with the "remote base" link used for the Resource/Travel Net was identified and corrected (fortunately just a loose cable). Linking to both AA6BT and N6NAC was confirmed to work well, and the Resource Net link was used to support the Los Altos Festival of Lights parade.



Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System

P.O. Box 1491, Mountain View, CA 94042

Email: info@SPECSNet.org • Web: www.specsnet.org



Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System

At this point (early December), all of the repeater-system functions other than the phone patch had been tested and seemed to be working well (we're still waiting for the re-installation of the phone line). Initial signal-coverage reports seem to show that the new system's coverage is essentially the same as the previous installation in the Old Hospital. The mysterious signal which had interfered with the operation of the 145.270 repeater on the Old Hospital is gone!

We'd like to extend special thanks to Lou Pietrelli and Ken King at El Camino Health for their enthusiastic support of our move!

We're Looking For A Few Good Hams

The SPECS Repeater Association is seeking to recruit a few new members to help maintain and support the W6ASH repeater in the years to come:

- Licensed amateur radio operators who live in one of the SPECS cities, and expect to reside here for the next few years.

- Dedicated to the fundamental mission of W6ASH as an open-access emergency service repeater.
- Previous experience in electronics and repeater systems is useful but not required - an eagerness to learn is sufficient.
- We're looking for several hams to assist with the technical aspects: antennas, the repeater radios, the control system and its programming, possible new projects and capabilities, troubleshooting and interference analysis, etc.
- We're also looking for someone to serve as an organizer, manage the occasional paperwork and keep records.

People interested in joining should contact Dave AE6EO <dplatt@radagast.org> and send him some information about their background. The RA will meet with candidates to discuss their interest in membership.

Reminder - Membership Renewal

Please take a moment **now** to go to our [membership page](#) to renew your membership for 2023, right now while you're thinking about it. It's a real deal!



Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System

P.O. Box 1491, Mountain View, CA 94042

Email: info@SPECSNet.org • Web: www.specsnet.org