



# Southern Peninsula Emergency Communications System

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## NEWSLETTER

WINTER, 2017-2018 - PUBLISHED BY REGULAR PEOPLE  
ON AN IRREGULAR BASIS

### ANNOUNCING: The SPECS 2018 Annual Meeting

Date: Saturday, January 20, 2018  
Time: 8:00 A.M. coffee, doughnuts and conversation  
9:00 A.M. meeting starts  
Where: El Camino Hospital, 2500 Grant Road, Mountain View, Rooms D, E & F on the lower level.  
Speaker: Edison Fong WB6IQN, Faculty Member UC Santa Cruz  
Topic: A Tri-Band Antenna (TBJ-1) for 2 meters, 1.25 meters, and 70cm Without Radials

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### **THIS NEWSLETTER IS THE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2018 SPECS ANNUAL MEETING and ELECTION of OFFICERS**

#### **Election of SPECS Officers**

- The slate below 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.
- Robert'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 2018**

President: Marc Roddin KI6HLH  
1st VP: Neil Katin, K2LL  
2nd VP: Dave Koberstein N9DK  
Secretary: Grant Elliot KK6FMQ  
Treasurer: Patrick Muffler KG6TMI  
Training: Paul Goldstein KJ6AMM

#### **SPECS Membership Renewal**

Join as a member or renew for 2018 at [www.specsnet.org](http://www.specsnet.org) from your computer or mobile device. You can also join or renew by mailing payment with the form on the website, or at the annual meeting.

#### **Featured Speaker**

Edison Fong, WB6IQN

“A Tri-Band Antenna (TBJ-1) for 2 meters, 1.25 meters, and 70cm Without Radials “



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Ed Fong was first licensed in 1968 as WN6IQN. He later upgraded to Extra Class with his present call of WB6IQN. He obtained the BSEE and MSEE degrees from the Univ. of California at Berkeley and his Ph.D. from the Univ. of San Francisco. A Senior Member of the IEEE, he has 12 patents and over 40 published papers and books in the area of communications and integrated circuit design. Presently, he is employed by the University of California, Santa Cruz (previously with Berkeley from 1997-2010) as an instructor teaching graduate classes in RF design. In his 35 year career, he has done work for Stanford University, National Semiconductor, Advanced Micro Devices, and numerous startup companies in the Silicon Valley

### SPECS Board Member Candidate

Dave Koberstein



### Biography

When Dave, N9DK, was 12, his father suggested they try amateur radio. He was first licensed as WB9YMG in Wisconsin and has been continuously licensed ever since. Sometime after moving to California in 1986 Dave became interested in packet radio, eventually running a 24x7 TNOS station with a bridge to the internet. More recently he has been active in Mountain View ARES, occasional SOTA activations, casual contesting, and dragging his KX3 along on vacations. Dave co-runs the Monday Night packet net and is a regular on the Monday Night voice net. He assumes packet duties for St Francis Acres CERT.

### Message from SPECS President

*Marc Roddin, KI6HLH*

At the end of my city's local net each week, the net control operator says: "Thank you for making your time and equipment available to the net." I'd like to use my space this year to amplify upon that sentence a

little bit. First, let's look at time. SPECS usually has over 100 check-ins each week from the cities. Usually it is only on holiday periods that we get fewer than 100 such check-ins. The number of UHF check-ins fluctuates somewhat, but 40 might be a typical number. We also have about 20 packet check-ins each week. For ease of calculation, we'll assume that each check-in requires about one tenth of an hour (or six minutes) for getting your radio ready, waiting until it is your turn, and listening to any announcements. Thus we have 100 city check-ins + 40 UHF + 20 packet check-ins or 160 in total. If each check-in equates to a tenth of an hour, that would be 16 hours for those who check in, and conservatively allow another 4 hours total for the net control operator for SPECS and for the city nets. This would give a total of 20 hours each week, or about 1000 volunteer hours per year. With the local minimum wage rate set by the government at about \$15 per hour, this equates to a value of our time of \$15,000 per year, just for the weekly check-ins, a considerable sum.

It is trickier to figure out the value of the radios that we use for SPECS. However, the lowest amount I could imagine would be 100 radio operators each owning a very basic radio that they could obtain for \$50. That would equate to a minimum value of \$5,000 for all of our radios, but I am sure that it is very much higher, simply because many operators, like me, are always interested in getting new and better or different radios.

With this perspective, it makes the thank you for time and equipment a genuine thank you for considerable value of time and investment in radios and antennas, not to mention packet equipment. To this, I add my own thank you to each of you for your continuing dedication to making sure that our community can have an emergency communications network available in an emergency should other communications methods fail.

### Treasurer's Comments

*Patrick Muffler KG6TMI*

Income from the Flea Market Saturday 08 April 2017 at De Anza College was seriously impacted by inclement weather, resulting in far fewer sellers than the number required to break even from gate receipts. SPECS Users Group collected only \$1,035.00 from only 34 sellers. This amount compares to \$1,795.00 for the 2016 SPECS Users Group Flea Market (also impacted by rain, but to a lesser degree) and \$2,681.00 for the 2015 SPECS Users Group Flea Market. The amount collected in 2017 was \$1,365.00 less than the \$2,400.00 fee paid by SPECS Users Group to the Association of Silicon Valley Amateur Radio Organizations (ASVARO). Fortunately, ASVARO still had a Rainout Protection Fund that covered this shortfall of \$1,365.00. It should be noted that the two rainy flea markets (2016 and 2017) nearly exhausted ASVARO's Rainout Protection Fund.



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### Secretary's Comments

*Grant Elliot KK6FMQ*

The SPECS Users Group board held three meetings in 2017: March 19, August 6 and December 10.

As in previous years the March meeting was largely devoted to Flea Market planning. However, the board also established an "Events" section on the Website to incorporate outside groups activities, considered a change to the Monday night UHF/220 Net script, and was updated on the functioning of the W6ASH 2m repeater.

The Flea Market was also a topic of discussion at the August meeting. While Flea Market revenues continue to decline, the SPECS UG will continue to participate until it no longer makes economic sense to do so. Other topics in August included finding a speaker for the 2018 Annual Meeting, continuing issues with the 2m repeater, consolidation of our email providers within the purview of "Google Tech Soup", a review of the Financial status of the organization and discussion of whether or not we should raise membership dues, and finally noted that it was time to elect a new "2nd VP."

The December meeting reviewed the plans for the Annual Newsletter and addressed planning for the Annual Meeting. The board also reviewed the Treasurer's report, considered a further change to the Monday night SPECSNET script, and reviewed the new specsnet.org email addresses. In addition the Board was updated on the operation of the Repeaters and renewed the Memorandum of Understanding between the SPECS User Group and SPECS Repeater Association. You can find a copy of this MOU on the website.

### Flea Market Report from 1st V.P.

*Neil Katin K2LL*

Once again we had rain during the flea market. This makes two years in a row for us, which I think is a record for rain-outs for a club.

We had very low turnout from the vendors, and did not make enough to pay for the facility rental fees. ASVARO (the parent organization for the

flea market) has a "rainy day fund" that made up for the loss. Concessions were approximately break-even, which is pretty good for the low turnout we had. By 10:30 the rain started again; we closed the flea market early.

The overall trajectory for flea market revenues (for the other clubs that didn't get rained out) continues its downward slide. The fees just to rent the venue is \$2400/month for each club, which results in a relatively high break-even point. We've been looking for an alternate venue for years without any success. If you have any leads on a company that would be willing to let us set up in a parking lot please let me know.

### SPECS Repeater Association

*Peter Griffith, WA6VAQ Scott Overstreet,  
N6NXI Dave Platt, AE6EO  
Keith Amidon, KJ6PUO*

The W6ASH repeater system continues in operation on the "old tower" at El Camino Hospital. Construction of the new medical-services building is underway, and we've been assured that our repeater system will have a new home on its roof once construction is complete.

Our 2-meter system has had some difficulties during 2017, due to what has turned out to be an RF interference problem. This interference has reduced our receiver sensitivity significantly. After repeated tests on the repeater and antenna system, we've confirmed that the fault isn't in the repeater itself, and apparently has its origin in other equipment on the roof of the old tower. We've been able to recreate the problem, have made good progress in ruling out some suspect equipment, and are continuing to work with the other parties involved to pin down the exact source of the interfering signal.

In the meantime, we've reduced the severity of the problem by moving the 2-meter system to an alternate antenna on the roof, and by turning off the 100 Hz CTCSS tone on the transmitter output. We've also moved the county Resource Net operations to our 440.800 MHz repeater, which is not affected by the 2-meter interference.

## Reminder - Membership Renewal

Whether or not you plan to attend the January 20th annual meeting, please take a moment **now** to go to [specsnet.org](http://specsnet.org) to renew your membership for 2018, right now while you're thinking about it. It's a real deal!



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