



QST NFL



Providing timely and interesting information to Radio Amateurs in North Florida

Volume 2, Issue 4

April 2015

Steve's Take:

From the NFL Section Manager

Our Newsletter and Web Page both look FB! Humongous thanks to Floyd KK3Q and Bert N8NN for their efforts – and thanks to those folks who took the time to send news and articles this month.

I attended the Playground ARC Hamfest in Ft. Walton Beach last month, and had a GREAT time! I was warmly welcomed and had the honor of spending most of my time with Frank Butler W4RH. I met many folks that I only knew by call or name, and now have a friendly face to put them with! I also met many new "faces" and got to spend time talking about my favorite pastime – Ham Radio! I encourage you to attend and support your local clubs hamfests and tailgates if you can!

*If you are not aware, the ARRL is supporting The Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2015 -- H.R.1301 – and it has been introduced in the US House of Representatives. We need your support – here is the web page for more information:
<http://www.arrl.org/hr-1301>*

This month will be a busy "admin" month as I get our ARRL Leadership database up to date, and plan for our participation in the Florida State Hurricane Exercise in May. Not much visiting going on this month!

Stay safe, get on the air, and have fun!!

EVERYONE COUNTS!

73, Steve WB4OMM

Editorial:

From the QST NFL Newsletter Editor

Remember this look?
The one you had likely had on your face when you found out you had passed your first exam?



In this picture you can see Yarissa Matos of Winter Park as she receives the good news from Doug Rehman-K4AC (ARRL S.E. Regional Director). This was one of several pictures received from the Lake Amateur Radio Association's most recent training and testing session.

More and more people are realizing the real worth of not only amateur radio but in obtaining their own license as well. VEs all over America are welcoming new members to our fine hobby through similar sessions.

In this edition of **QST NFL**:

- Ted Luebbers, K1AYZ - LARA licensing article & pictures
- N6USP get full name – Hurricane Net materials
- Jeff Capehart, W4UFL - Easter egg hunt materials & pictures
- John Knott, N4JTK - Orange County repeater article
- Ron Rogers, WW8RR – Southeastern VHF Society Conference

73 de KK3Q (hamradio@kk3q.net)

From the ARRL

The window to apply for ARRL Centennial Points Challenge and W1AW Worked All States awards is now open!

The ARRL Centennial operating events were hugely successful, with participation way beyond anyone's expectations. Certificates will be available for the Centennial Points Challenge Award, while W1AW WAS Award participants will have the option of a certificate or a plaque. Certificates are \$16, and plaques are \$60. Centennial Points Challenge logs must have been submitted through LoTW by January 22, but participants may apply for Centennial operating awards indefinitely. The system automatically looks for points-qualifying QSOs from submitted logs and applies them to each participant's Centennial Points Challenge total. While most Centennial QSO Party participants entered their contact information into LoTW, operators do not have to use LoTW to apply for Points Challenge certificates or W1AW WAS awards.

Qualifying for the Top Level Award requires 15,000 points. The Third Level Award requires 7500 points, while the Second and First Level awards require 3000 and 1000 points, respectively. Point totals will be printed on certificates.

US stations that worked W1AW/p and W100AW during the Centennial may request QSL cards via the [Incoming QSL Service](#) on the Centennial QSO Party web page. This is a one-time only use of the QSL Bureau for this purpose, and those who want to receive cards via the Bureau should ensure that their accounts are sufficiently funded, because cards will not be held.



2014 Official Observers - NFL Group Activities:

Hours spent monitoring: 2268.5

Advisories sent: 12

We currently have 11 NFL Official Observers on the roster.

Rick, AA4W – NFL OO Coordinator

ON THE AIR:

The Traders Net

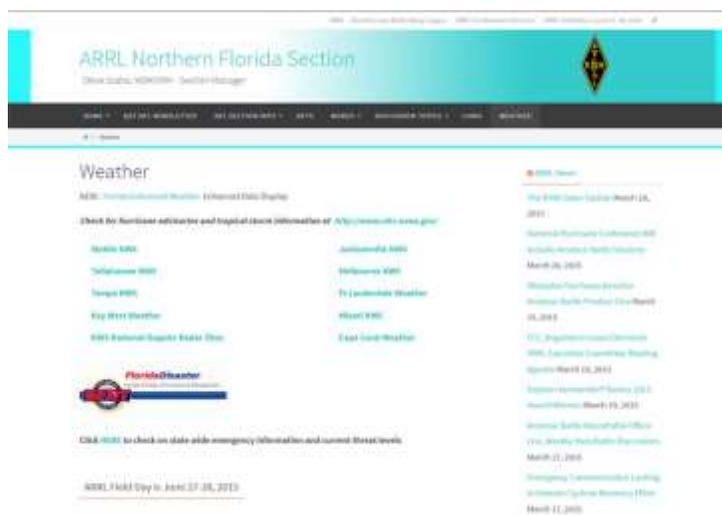
The Traders Net meets every Sunday at 8:00 AM on 3.933 MHz. Please join us for equipment and friendship. Thanks!! Carl, AA4MI

Clay County ARES Net

Comment: Clay County ARES Net meets every Sunday evening on 146.925 Tone 156.7 at 19:30 local. This is the "Sleepy Hollow Repeater" located near Fleming Island, Florida. All Amateurs are welcome to join the net. For more information, contact Scott Roberts KK4ECR at kk4ecr@gmail.com

QCWA Chapter #45

QCWA Citrus Chapter 45 operates its state of the art repeater, W4PLA, on 147.195 MHz and conducts a net every Tuesday evening at 7:30 PM local time. Also we now offer an Echo link connection every Tuesday. The link is "W2AS-L" and the node # is 627152. If you are a QCWA member (any chapter!) feel free to join us!



Don't forget to check out the QST NFL web site! It is located at: <http://arrl-nfl.org/>

NFL CLUB NEWS:

Seventeen People from Lake County Florida Earn their Amateur Radio License



(L-R) 8 of the 9 LARA Volunteer Examiners. Doug Rehman-K4FC (ARRL S.E. Regional Director), John Walton, WB4HV, Fred Fitte, NF4F, Paul Branch, K3NON, David Pennell, NP2MR, Ted Luebbers, K1AYZ, Strait Hollis, KT4YA, Jay Boehme, N4KXO, President of LARA. Not pictured was Al Richter, W4ALR.



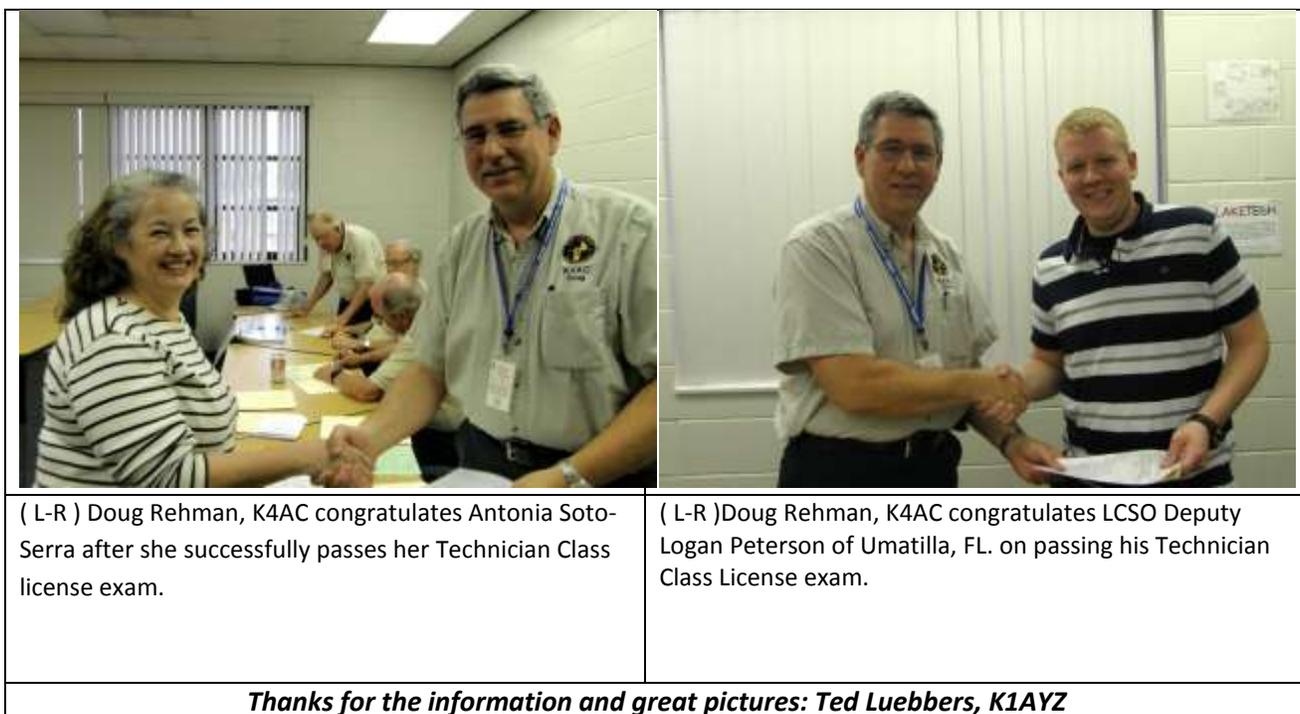
(L-R) Technician Class course instructors were LCSO Jason Matthews, K4AUS, David Pennell, NP2MR, Jay Boehme, N4KXO, LCSO Gordon Williamson, N4TT and LCSO Al Richter, W4ALR.



Technician Class attendees. Instructors on top left row LCSO Gordon Williamson, LCSO Jason Matthews, and bottom left LCSO Al Richter.



(L-R) Doug Rehman, K4AC congratulates Shane Matthews on passing the Technician Class exam. Shane is the father of Deputy Jason Matthews, K4AUS.



Florida Statewide Hurricane Net

Granted that the 2015 Hurricane Season is still several months away but a prepared ham shouldn't wait for a Category 3 storm's arrival at our coasts before they actually get prepared. I sure the majority of us keep our equipment up to date, maybe we go as far as having an efficient emergency plan. But what about our *operating skills*? Even though many of us participate in HF and VHF nets there are protocols in place during emergencies (of all kinds) which need to be followed. The best way to learn these protocols is through participation in a net such as the **Florida Statewide Hurricane Net**. This net serves all three Florida ARRL sections as they foster an attitude of cooperation so that people are not falling all over themselves when an actual emergency comes along. Note that word "*cooperation*" is used and not "*competition*" because the last thing needed during an emergency is frequency cops and loose cannons.



There is a great deal of information on their web page so I have included a link to their web site at the end of this article. Hop over there and look through the FHN site and another site belonging to the Brevard Amateur Radio Society where they have a good source of information concerning EmComm.

[Florida Statewide Hurricane Net](#) - [Brevard Amateur Radio Society](#)

Thanks to Bob, N6USP for the material on the FHN and BEARS – de KK3Q

“Beeping Egg Hunt” for Deaf and/or Blind Children

On Saturday April 5th, 2014 the University of Florida Delta Gamma Sorority held a Beeping Egg Hunt for Deaf and/or Blind Children and their families living in North Central Florida. Volunteers from the Gainesville Amateur Radio Society serviced the Beeping Eggs. Children with an auditory impairment were able to identify the eggs by their bright colors. The visually impaired children were able to hear the eggs by the beeping noise and collect them through touch. The egg hunt usually results in several eggs getting stepped on breaking circuits.

After several events, the number of working eggs had become too few for the organization to support, so they reached out to GARS. Carol (KG4FEX) and Vann Chesney (AC4QS) took on the task of repairing, storing, and preparing the eggs for the hunt each year. They found that some eggs had deteriorated through corroded batteries left inside the circuit boards. After cleaning, repairing, and testing the beeping circuits, Carol and Vann have a system in place to ensure the batteries are removed and the eggs are stored properly each year.



Carol, KG4FEX is seated in photo wearing the red GARS shirt.

Last year, the sorority provided arts and crafts, a bounce house, music, games, snacks, live bunnies and a puppy for the children to pet, Easter baskets, and a visit by the Easter Bunny, in addition to the actual Beeping Egg Hunt. After several hours of fun and games and finding beeping eggs, the children and their families left the Egg Hunt with Easter Baskets full of candy and memories of a wonderful day spent with very special friends. Twenty three families with children with sensory impairment participated in the Beeping Egg Hunt.

The event was coordinated by the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind and the Division of Blind Services. The Division Newsletter included a mention of how ham radio volunteers were critical in supporting the event. This year's event took place on Saturday March 28, 2015. Carol and Vann performed their systems check on the Beeping Eggs on March 21 in preparation for the egg hunt.

Thanks for the information and great pictures: Jeff Capehart, W4UFL – de KK3Q

New Thursday night net/Skywarn Net Frequency

For a very long time 146.730 repeater has been the main focal point for Orange County ARES communications. The range on the repeater has been phenomenal for many years. I remember I could hit 73 from US192 and I-95 in Melbourne with no issue many years ago. The repeater has served the community and ARES very well, but as we all know as of late there is something that has been interfering with the repeater. This interference is affecting the entire downtown area of Orlando on VHF. Our repeater is not the only one affected. We are not entirely sure on what is causing the interference.



Since the interference has hurt our net attendance and with the hurricane season in our not too distant future we will start using the 443.050 repeater for our main communications needs. So effective immediately our Thursday night nets and Skywarn activations will be on this repeater. We will only hold the UHF Thursday night net along with our digital nets for now. In the meantime, we are looking into the possibility in relocating 73 to a different location.

To recap our repeaters:

443.050 +5.00 103.5 Mixed Mode Fusion

442.525 +5.00 103.5 Mixed Mode P25

442.700 +5.00 103.5 Analog only

443.525 +5.00 103.5 Repeater scheduled to be replaced soon

146.730 -.600 103.5 our poor ill VHF repeater

Also a DMR and another Fusion repeater are in our near future!

John Knott, N4JTK

Emergency Coordinator

Orange County ARES

www.ocares.org

Florida Section Managers Meeting (ARES and ARRL Leadership)

On February 13, 2015 all three Florida Section Managers met with Florida State EM to work out a cooperative communications plan for the entire state. This was the second time your SM and the other Florida SMs met (this past September in Melbourne was the first meeting) to work together for the entire Florida ham and non-ham communities. What follows is a summary of that meeting.

**ARRL Florida Tri-Section ARES and
Florida Department of Emergency Management Meeting
Orlando Hamcation
February 13, 2015**

The meeting was called to order 2:12 P.M. The following were in attendance at the meeting

- Phil Royce KE4PWE – Communications Branch Manager, Florida Division of EM
- Robert Little KK4OAI – Planning Consultant, Florida Division of EM
- Darrell Davis KT4WX – Section Manager, ARRL West Central Florida Section
- Ben Henley KI4IGX – Section Emergency Coordinator, ARRL West Central Florida Section
- Randy Payne K4EZM – Assistant Section Manager, ASEC, ARRL West Central Florida Section
- Jeff Beals WA4AW – Section Manager, ARRL Southern Florida Section
- Larry Zimmer W4LWZ – Section Emergency Coordinator, ARRL Southern Florida Section
- Steve Szabo WB4OMM – Section Manager, ARRL Northern Florida Section
- Charlie Benn WB2SNN – District Emergency Coordinator, ARRL Southern Florida Section

Ben introduced the purpose of this meeting and reviewed past discussion on establishing a statewide communications plan with each section maintaining its own communications plan while supporting the state wide plan. The hope is that the state plan will expand into Georgia and Alabama. The necessity of being able to communicate with the State EOC and the backup EOC at Camp Blanding was mentioned during discussion on establishing a state plan. In the ensuing discussion, a point was raised on the necessity of working with FEMA in our planning.

Discussion on the use of HF and digital modes led to the question of establishing one digital mode for state operations. Phil reported that the State EOC has the following systems:

- PACTOR HF Only Amateur
- WL2K RMS Gateway
- Echolink
- D-Star and D-Rats
- Health and Welfare are handled via D-Star 46B and 46C Reflectors

The State EOC is requesting all county EOC amateur radio stations have HF Voice and Data capability. Ben said the West Central counties are capable of using HF now. Also, since the State EOC only has PACTOR that's what we need to use to communicate with them via digital.

In the continuing discussion, there was a stress on the point that we are communicators no matter what the means. We need to be prepared to use any existing communications system to maintain communications – for example, satellite phones, public radio systems, and of course amateur radio. During this discussion, Darrell raised the question of the usability of a Raspberry PI to do PACTOR.

Following some discussion on the establishment of a state wide HF net, the decision was made to hold a net on 7.242 MHz at 10:00 AM on the last Tuesday of each month.

Ben requested that each section send him their plan. He will in turn send a report to the State EOC. It was noted that any established plan needs to be annually reviewed. The State plan could be reviewed in a meeting at the Orlando Hamcation.

Each section needs to appoint one person who will serve as the contact person for the state.

Stress was placed on respecting the role of Emergency Coordinators, avoiding running rough shod over them. When there is a need, it should be met NOW, not in four or five days. It was noted that we all deal with the problem of having people who are only after a badge and recognition rather than being truly dedicated to serving needs. There was repeated stress on the point that we are communicators first and foremost, not just “hams.”

Closing discussion focused on establishing our next meeting date. There may be a conference call set to save driving. We can meet annually at Orlando with conference calls between these meetings. All documentation on plans for communications between sections should be out no later than April 30 (NOTE the request made by Ben on handling these).

Submitted by Randy Payne K4EZM
West Central Florida ASM and ASEC, EC Highlands County

Section Manager Visits in March, April, and May

SM Visits Made for March 2015:

DB CERT ARC Meeting, Daytona Beach, FL
Playground ARC Hamfest, Ft. Walton Beach, FL
NAQCC-FL Chapter Operation, DeBary, FL

Tentative SM Visits for April 2015:

None scheduled for this month

Tentative SM Visits for May 2015:

Clay County ARES Meeting, Orange Park, FL
Dayton Hamvention, Dayton, OH (ARRL Booth Volunteer)

Submitting your club events and pictures can be done by sending them via email to hamradio@kk3q.net. Please try to send as large an image or images as you can. Low res images don't display or print all that well.

Northern Florida Section Web Page:

<http://arrl-nfl.org/>

