



# QST NFL



*Sharing information of interest to Radio Amateurs in North Florida*

Volume 9 Issue 1

[www.arrl-nfl.org](http://www.arrl-nfl.org)

January 2022

## Northern Florida Section has a New Section Emergency Coordinator

After serving the Northern Florida Section since 2018, Karl Martin – K4HBN has stepped down from the position of Section Emergency Coordinator due to personal reasons. Karl was instrumental in the creation of the Florida Tri-Section ARES Position Task Book and many other efforts to help unify ARES across the state. “It’s been a privilege working with you these past years. I hope to still be an active participant in the Section and ARES so I may help in any way I can,” said Karl in his message to the section’s Emergency Coordinators.



Stepping into the role is Arc Thames – W4CPD. Arc is no stranger to incident management having served in the Auxiliary Unit of the Crestview, FL Police Department for nine years, ending as the Lieutenant of their volunteer police force. In 2019 Arc’s focus shifted to amateur radio in Santa Rosa County where he became an ARES Assistant Emergency Coordinator. In 2020, just prior to Hurricanes Sally and Zeta that impacted the county, Arc succeeded Ray Crepeau-K1HG as ARES Emergency Coordinator of Santa Rosa County. “I have worked with Arc for some time, and I think he will make a great SEC. I look forward to working with him during the transition,” said Karl-K4HBN.



“I’m extremely excited, energized, and thankful to be given this opportunity,” said Arc-W4CPD. Arc says he has many ideas he hopes will continue the work Karl-K4HBN had started. As to not lose his talent and wealth of knowledge in emergency communications and ARES, Arc has asked Karl to stay on as Assistant Section Emergency Coordinator. “Stay tuned for great things ahead,” said Arc-W4CPD.

For more information on the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) program in the Northern Florida Section, visit their website [arrl-nfl.org/ares](http://arrl-nfl.org/ares).

## QSO Today—Virtual Ham Expo

Mark your calendar for March 12-13 as Bob Lightner, W4GJ, will be making a presentation on his success with the Loften High School radio club in Gainesville.



How I Started a  
Great High School  
HAM Club

Dr. Bob Lightner  
W4GJ

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You can email your QST NFL input to [n4gl.marty@gmail.com](mailto:n4gl.marty@gmail.com), Marty Brown, N4GL, Editor.

All submissions are subject to editing prior to publication.



## Calling all PIO's

By Scott Roberts, KK4ECR

Assistant Section Manager / Public Information Coordinator

### Happy New Year and welcome to 2022!

With the kickoff of 2022, it is time to put a call out for PIO's. We are looking to have a PIO in every county in the NFL Section. So, what does it mean to be a PIO in the NFL Section ARES?

The Public Information Officer for each country is appointed by and reports to the ARRL section Public Information Coordinator (PIC) generally upon the recommendation of an affiliated club and only with the approval of the Section Manager. PIOs are usually (although not limited to being) club publicity chairpersons and must be full ARRL members. ARES Teams should be encouraged to develop PIO's as part of their groups to act during emergencies, who can be deployed with ARES responders to handle media relations during an emergency or callout.

During times when there are no emergencies, the PIO, in coordination with the Public Information Coordinator, should work to prepare an emergency response PR kit, including general brochures on Amateur Radio and specific information about local groups and units. These should be distributed to SECs and ECs **before** an emergency occurs. At a minimum, the one-page form provided in this book should be widely distributed. Then, during emergencies, these kits should be made available to reporters at the scene or at a command post.

During an emergency, the PIO should become the primary contact for the local media and assures that reporters who need accurate information **about Amateur Radio and ARES** know where to find it. Note that the PIO's job is to be available to and work with news media. These will probably be at a Joint Information Center (JIC) or Emergency Operations Center and most likely also where the PIO should deploy. Developing relationships with media members well in advance is a good way to promote trust from them.

A cartoon drawing of a person with spiky hair, wearing a yellow vest with "PIO" written on it in black letters. The person is pointing their right index finger upwards.	<h3>A Day in the Life of a PIO</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate informative and effective information to the public.</li> <li>• Write press releases and prepare information to be distributed by media outlets</li> <li>• Arrange interviews with served agencies and media outlets</li> <li>• Respond to requests for information from served agencies and media outlets.</li> </ul>
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### Other responsibilities of a PIO in the NFL Section:

- PIO's must always be well-groomed and always have a neat and appropriate appearance when they might deal with media of any type. Good visual impressions are long lasting and have an impact on the perception of amateur radio and its standards.
- Being able to articulate and communicate efficiently is paramount, especially when it comes to public speaking and interpersonal skills.
- The PIO must also keep their PIC (or in the absence of a PIC, the SM) advised of current situations on an on-going basis.
- Build relationships with local served agencies, reporters, and editors.

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- Educate the public on what Amateur Radio is about and how we can help the community.
- Educate your ARES organization and local Amateur Radio clubs about how to work with the public and promote our hobby.
- FROM COURSE: IS-702 - NIMS Public Information Systems Basic responsibilities of the PIO also include the following:
  - \* Respond to inquiries from the news media and the public;
  - \* Monitor the news media to detect and correct misinformation and to identify emerging trends or issues;
  - \* Advise Incident Command on public information issues and advocate for the community to ensure its public information needs are addressed;
  - \* Manage the release of emergency public information and warnings; and
  - \* Coordinate, clear with appropriate authorities, and disseminate accurate and timely information related to the incident.

If you are interested in becoming a PIO for your county, contact your county's Emergency Coordinator or Section Public Emergency Coordinator to apply.



## From the Section Emergency Coordinator Arc – W4CPD

As we look at what 2022 has in store for us, we're going to be very busy! Over the last few weeks, I've been reaching out to our various county Emergency Coordinators to get insights on their ARES programs and what they have planned. It's safe to say, we've got a very strong and successful ARES program in many of our counties throughout the Northern Florida Section. Our team will have a Zoom meeting in January to get our leadership up to speed on what's happened over the last year and to plan for the year ahead.

If you haven't already, please make plans to attend the Emergency Communications track at the [ARRL National Convention](#) on Thursday February 10, the day before HamCation. There are several great presentations lined up and it's a great opportunity to meet and fellowship with other members of the team. Additionally, from February 7-9 in Orlando will be the DHS AUXCOMM Training Course. If you haven't had a chance to take this course yet, I highly recommend it. The class is full, but there is a waiting list.

I want to congratulate the following individuals on their recent appointments as Emergency Coordinators for their respective counties. We appreciate your willingness to serve!

- **Bay County**, Doug Gibson KN4PFZ
- **Citrus County**, Wayne King K4SOP
- **Escambia County**, Gene Bannon KB4HAH
- **Okaloosa County**, Capt. John Johnston W4KKJ
- **Marion County**, Hayden Kaufman N2HAY
- **Suwannee County**, Michael Meador KM4BTW
- **Wakulla County**, Ken Fields W4KEF

We are in search of additional net control stations for the Northern Florida ARES Net that takes place Monday through Saturday at 9A Eastern/8A Central on 3950 KHz. If you transmit and receive well across the section, please email me at [arc.thames@srcares.org](mailto:arc.thames@srcares.org). Be on the lookout for information on signups for the ARES Emergency Net. We're hoping to get together a list of NCS' to be on standby for when a disaster strikes and to practice ahead of an actual emergency.

## Jacksonville Radio News

Billy Williams, N4UF

The North Florida Amateur Radio Society (NOFARS) meets Thursday, January 13th at Hogan Baptist Church, 8045 Hogan Rd. Plans for 2022 will be up for discussion. The Jacksonville Radio FREE Flea and Gate River Run are in March.

Ninety persons attended the Jacksonville Christmas Party on Saturday, December 11th at Terry Parker Baptist Church. NOFARS President Roger Knight, KI4PIL arranged tasty catered barbecue and members brought a big selection of desserts. Plenty of prizes were distributed. Jerry Tabor, N2GLF was honored as 2021 NOFARS Amateur Radio Operator of the Year and Bill Johnson, KO4RMX was named Duval ARES Volunteer of the Year.

The Salvation Army received dozens of toys for distribution to make Christmas brighter for local children. Major Keith Biggers and CBS47/Fox30 Chief Meteorologist Mike Buresh were at the dinner to accept toy donations. They thanked all who contributed.

In November, Duval ARES held a training session on portable HF antenna installation. Instructors Brian Schultheis, K4BJS and Mike Robinson, KD2SXD discussed and demonstrated options for establishing effective communications in portable operating situations using 40, 60 and 80 meters. The session included hands-on installation and disassembly practice plus safety considerations.

### Looking for Something?

Gordon Gibby, KX4Z, has taken the time to index the articles from all the 2021 issues of **QST NFL**! The link below takes you to a pdf of all the articles in alphabetical order. This link is also on the [arrrl-nfl.org](https://arrrl-nfl.org) website newsletter tab.

<https://arrrl-nfl.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/2021QSTNFLIndex.pdf>



## ATU100 Automatic Antenna Tuner Kit – Part 2

Bert Garcia N8NN

Last month I assembled the ATU100 automatic antenna tuner, and I'm delighted with its performance [1,2]. I have since received the \$29 optional case [3] and have installed the tuner in the case. There are several options when ordering the case – SO-239 connectors, BNC connectors, or SMA connectors. No ground post assembly was included even though the case was drilled and marked for a ground post. No instructions were included but an Internet search will provide guidance for tapping into the circuit board to connect the Auto and Bypass push buttons. It helps to have a photo of an ATU100 installed in a case to see how the circuit board is mounted. Figure 1 shows the case components and my completed ATU100.



Figure 1: ATU100 Case kit and my ATU100 (left).

I had to remove the SMA connectors from my ATU100 so it would fit in the case. If you receive your case before you assemble your ATU100, you won't have this problem. An OLED display was included with the case. Since the ATU100 kit may be purchased with several displays sizes, having the correct display to fit the case is a plus. No hookup wire was provided. I suggest using 18 AWG stranded wire for the RF connectors and 22 AWG stranded wire for the DC power and push button wiring. Use the Dupont ribbon cable from the ATU100 kit for the display wiring, taking care to swap the order of the wires at one end of the cable since the pins on the ATU100 circuit board and the pins on the OLED display are not arranged in the same order. Tack solder the wires for the Auto and Bypass buttons on the bottom on the board. Auto goes to B1 and Bypass goes to B2.

I believe the best approach to assembling the case is to solder the RF, DC power and push button wires to the ATU100 circuit board leaving enough length to reach their destinations. Precut the RF wires to 4 inches, the DC power wires to Red 4 inches and Black 12 inches, and the push button wires to 4 inches. Install the ATU100 circuit board into the grooves of the case bottom using the four circuit board tabs provided. Install all components on the front and rear panels except the power switch and mount the panels to the case bottom. Trim the wires to fit and solder in place. Since one side of all three push buttons is grounded, you can use a piece of bare 22 AWG solid wire to connect the push buttons together. Install the DC power switch in the front panel and connect the 4 inch Red wire. Add a 9 inch Red wire to the center pin of the DC power connector. Route the DC wiring along the bottom side of the case and away from the toroids. After all wires are soldered in place, attach the top of the case. Since you made no wiring errors, you're done!

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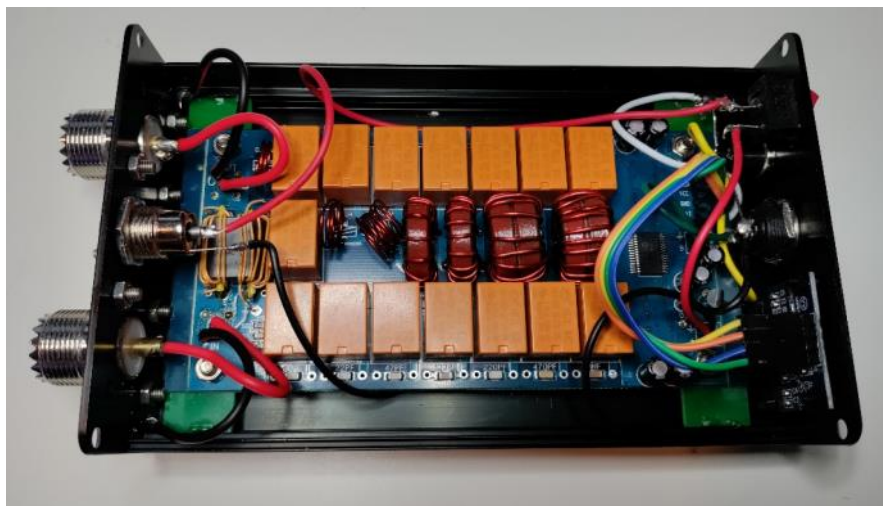


Figure 2: The completed ATU100 installed in the case.



Figure 3: Front and rear views of the completed ATU100.

My total investment was \$66 and some hookup wire. That price compares favorably with name brand factory built tuners, and I had the fun of building it myself. I always say, "Vegetables grown in your own garden always taste better."

#### References:

1. ATU100 Automatic Antenna Tuner Kit, Bert Garcia N8NN, The Oracle, page 5, <https://k4gso.us/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/The-Oracle-December-2021.pdf>.
2. ATU100 Automatic Antenna Tuner Kit, Bert Garcia N8NN, QST NFL Newsletter, page 7, <https://arrrl-nfl.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/00-QST-NFL-December-2021.pdf>.
3. ATU100 kit shell case, Ebay, \$29 free shipping, <https://www.ebay.com/itm/133778137539?var=433222379302>.



# W4ZBB

Playground Amateur Radio Club

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## The 52nd ANNUAL PARC Hamfest

March 18-19, 2022  
Friday 4p-8p  
Saturday 8a-2p

NWF Fairgrounds  
1958 Lewis Turner Blvd  
Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547

Admission: \$7  
Tables: \$15  
Tailgating encouraged! \$10/spot  
RV Parking \$30 per night, 30A, water, sewer included.

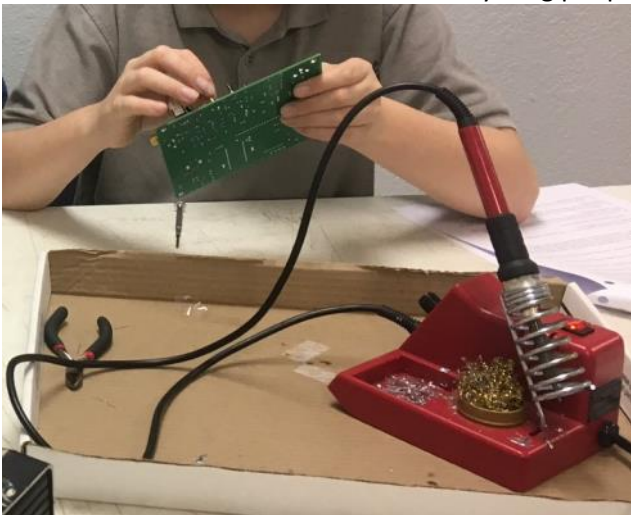
Contact: [hamfest@w4zbb.org](mailto:hamfest@w4zbb.org)  
(850) 359-9186



## Getting a Foot into Schools to teach STEM/Ham Radio

by Gordon Gibby KX4Z

There are often cries about the lack of "young people" in ham radio, but not quite so many involved in successful ways to ADD more young people. Some groups, however, have found success by venturing into the "maker" community or creating community efforts to provide STEM training (see some of the talks available at: <https://sites.google.com/view/ratpac> ). A common denominator appears to be **significant effort expended to provide interesting educational opportunities for the community.**



FCC Regulations 97.1 suggests this is part and parcel of the mission of the Amateur Radio Service -- it should provide several benefits to the nation, not just a fun hobby for folks who like to talk to each other. Creating a reservoir of technically trained operators and electronics experts will take some work, however!

### Schools?

One way to do that is to get a foot into grade-schools to provide beneficial education, and leveraging that into a STEM or ham radio-based club. My experience has only been in private, religious-based schools, which appear to have a bit more leeway in required credentials for teachers. With my background in both engineering and medicine, I'm quite capable of teaching several STEM type subjects, including chemistry, physics, and advanced mathematics. I dabbled in high-school teaching a bit earlier in life and thoroughly enjoyed it - even though it is WORK.

So after retiring, and a year of COVID-reduced activities, I got a phone call asking if I would like to fill in a *part-time vacancy* for a Chemistry teacher at a local private school -- and I jumped at it! This hybrid school has organized classes Tue-Fri, so I still have significant "time to myself" but it does affect when I can take long RV trips, to be sure. Interestingly, the administration allows a variety of topics to be presented in smaller groups during an extended "lunch" time -- and there I saw the opportunity for both a **ham radio club** and a **computer programming club**. My agreement is **part-time**: I only have to teach ONE course -- 45 minutes, four days a week, so it isn't "tough" at all to prepare and carry out.....and it gives me plenty to look forward to each week. (They **PAY** me! Makes a Roth IRA possible! ) The clubs I do once a week each, for free and fun. The honors chemistry students are good kids, eager to learn, and they love exciting stories with a chemical flavor as I bring world chemistry-related news stories & some of my medical war-stories into the classroom.

### NITTY GRITTY

Teaching high school comes with some hurdles. Thankfully you just follow a textbook. However, the school had chosen a fairly *advanced* text, almost college level chemistry. The publisher provided vast amounts of resources, including a timeline, videos, and even a test generator and sample tests. Looking over the timeline and comparing to the contact hours of a 4-day/week school, I realized we would be FLYING -- but here we are, half-way through the year, and halfway through the text! Peppering the students with questions and challenging them with technology has been VERY well received-- you wouldn't believe the nice comments I got on a birthday card from students and their parents! I've had to scrounge to create exciting laboratories (students were thrilled to get us to use butane burners and light magnesium ribbon (1/2 gram) on fire inside a safety crucible!) and thankfully there are others on staff to whom I can go for advice. The school also extensively used MICROSOFT TEAMS....which I despise....and I had to learn how to use multiple components. But when we had to go to "virtual" during a covid-scare I learned how to teach using a camera and whiteboard (very similar to what our ham radio group had been doing for meetings for a year) -- and this also allowed me to take an RV trip and literally teach chemistry from a picnic table!

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## HAM RADIO CLUB

The ham radio club didn't go the way I expected it. Instead of attracting older students, it attracted MIDDLE SCHOOL students! We meet one day a week during lunch. What would be interesting to them? I tried doing a bit of technician-level radio spectrum and electronics theory but their eyes glazed over. The BIG HIT was when I created a KIT for them to literally solder together themselves. (See: [https://qsl.net/nf4rc/2021/SchoolReceiver\(Oct21\).pdf](https://qsl.net/nf4rc/2021/SchoolReceiver(Oct21).pdf) -- and there are LOTS of kits out there.) This was a prized new skill that gave them more self-esteem and made them "special" -- they were allowed to use SOLDERING IRONS (while all wearing safety glasses). They learned *resistors* from *capacitors*, *polarity markings*, *transistors*, and how to safely use diagonal cutters to remove the excess leads. Last week they were literally winding **toroidal trifilar transformers**! Spinning the wires with a portable drill fascinated them. The theory is a bit above them, but they are learning all kinds of things that the seniors in our local ARES(R) group have also had to learn. Along with our recent EXTRA class course, we will end up with four working short-wave hybrid radios with very accurate digital tuning, and AM or SSB or DATA reception with excellent sensitivity. The students saw how a random long wire HF antenna works, tossed out the school 2nd floor window and tied to a tree. They don't know it, but next week they will all receive a working short-wave radio and antenna wire -- and a "manual" with suggested frequencies to peruse -- to take home with them as a Christmas present!



Next quarter we will probably begin soldering a simple **sound-card isolation system** and learning how to read "secret" ham radio RTTY and FT8 texts. The students are having great fun, and will slowly advance toward Technician-level capabilities. Whether or not they get the license NOW isn't the important thing -- it is **ham radio serving the community and providing educational experiences and opportunities that wouldn't otherwise be available** to these young students.

So if you have some industry experience, you are very likely capable of easily part-time teaching a single course -- and a local school near you might be VERY happy to hear of your interest and willingness to join in. Give it a try! That's a foot in the door to teach even more!



## QCWA Chapter 62, Ocala Elects Officers

Ken Simpson, W8EK, President

Chapter 62, based in Ocala, FL held a real in person meeting on December 9, 2021 at the China Lee Buffet on East Springs Blvd in

Ocala. In December, the meeting is moved from the normal fourth Thursday to the second Thursday, in order to avoid the Holidays.

Election of officers for the 2022 year took place. The following were elected:

- President - Ken Simpson, W8EK
- Vice President - Ned Davis, WB4BKO
- Secretary - Doug Hawkins, W3HH
- Treasurer - Dick Schauer, W8DYV

As they do every December, the chapter voted to donate to the Sheriff's Youth Ranch.

Because of covid, and the fact we really did not need to spend any money other than the donation above, it was voted to suspend dues for 2022, provided the member has previously been a member in good standing.

The next meeting will be held on February 24, at 12:30 PM at the China Lee Buffet.

Chapter 62 also holds an on the air net on 3940 KHz at 9 AM local time every Saturday morning. Everyone is invited to check in.



## Playground Amateur Radio Club

DJ Stewart , KI4ZER -.- .. ....- -.-. .-.-

Hello and Happy Almost New Year to all of you! This December we had a multitude of events to mark your calendars with!

Up first is the Playground Amateur Radio Club as they Present their End of Year Auction! This was a good success for those that attended and many great items were sold to the highest bidder! All proceeds donated to the Playground Amateur Radio Club are being utilized to finalize Antenna Tower Repairs, fund a membership drive, improve the clubhouse and prepare for the upcoming March 19/20 2022 HAMFEST! This will be tier 52<sup>nd</sup> annual so come on out and share the love of the Hobby and enjoy the camaraderie!

Going into the first weekend the North Okaloosa Amateur Radio Club is worked with the City of Crestview and the Main Street Crestview Association to put on the highly anticipated Annual Christmas Parade! This was a great time enjoyed by all who attended and especially their operators who provided reliable communications and coordination for the directing and the flow of the Parade! Santa Stuffed their stockings and rumor has it some may have even got new equipment!

What could be next but the folks at WF4X? That's right! DeFuniak Springs Florida is home to another great club and these folks know how to put on an event! Come join in on the fun as they cannot wait to see you for the return of their tailgate events with the first one on January the 8th of 2022 at 312 college Ave in DeFuniak Springs Florida!

We went back to Crestview for the next event with the folks once again from the North Okaloosa Amateur Radio Club as they held their monthly business meeting on 9 Dec 2021 at 7pm. They firmed up plans for the wonderful Multi-Club dinner on the 18th of December 2021 at 2 pm! This event was touted as one of the events not to be missed and there was no room for disappointment! The Club really pulled off another great event here and stuffed all the bellies in the room! There were some leftovers and many people got to enjoy a hearty second course for their Sunday Lunch!

Closing in on Christmas and just before the multi-club meal we had the business meeting at the Playground Amateur Radio Club on the 16th of December 2022 at 7:30 pm. These fine operators will continue to discuss, plan and take action to finalize the reconstruction efforts on their tower! All actions as mentioned above, the Playground Amateur Radio Club has rebuilt their rotor and is ready to move forward with the top section assembly and testing prior to hoisting it up to the heavens!

Only a few days away from Christmas we attended a meeting with the fine folks at the Walton County ARES! There multiple club representatives from Walton and Okaloosa Counties shared in completing action in the ARRL ARES Task Book! These folks are sure to enhance the capabilities in the state of Florida and beyond as trained volunteers to enhance the safety, training, education and assist in protective measures that will mitigate many incidents should the need arise!

Thank you all for your time! Here is looking forward to the closeout of an extremely active year! There will be more to come and many new voices to be heard from as the energy continues to spread in support of our communities, each other and our wonderful hobby in the coming new year!



## Northwest Florida Ham Radio Operators Participate in Fox Hunt

Arc Thames, W4CPD

Ham radio operators from Escambia, Santa Rosa, and Okaloosa counties came together on Saturday December 4 to hunt a fox. The fox they were hunting was not the four-legged kind but that of a radio transmitter.

A fox hunt in ham radio is where individuals or teams attempt to find a hidden transmitter using handheld or mobile directional antennas within a designated area. Searches can be done on foot or in a vehicle. Fox hunts are not just for fun but a great learning activity to help with search and rescue activities as well as finding interference on a frequency.

Operators began hunting the fox at 9:00 AM Saturday morning from various locations within the tri-county area. Within 45 minutes the first hunter, Ray Yarbrough-KF4FXW had arrived. Over the course of the next 2 hours various individual operators and teams had located the fox, which was at Floridatown Park on Escambia Bay in Pace, FL. Various antenna styles were used by those who participated, including many built by the hams themselves.

Once everyone who had signed up to participate in the event had arrived the group joined together for a Christmas Luncheon sponsored by one of the local amateur radio operators. Everyone had a great time fellowshiping with each other, sharing stories from their hunt, and enjoying some great barbeque. The team is looking to host a fox hunt at least once a quarter moving into the new year to ensure everyone has a chance to practice using their antennas and honing their signal hunting skills.



*Pictured- Ray KF4FXW's winning antenna*



*Pictured from L to R – Houston K2TAP and Charlie KN4VGY*



*Fellowshipping!*



*Pictured from L to R – Bill WY8O, Bill KC4UBC, and Gene KB4HAH*



## Alachua County NFARC/ARES(R) Adds Key Protection to Pricy Go-Boxes

by Gordon Gibby KX4Z



*Our little band upgraded TEN go-boxes in one morning.*

Alachua County ARES(R)/NFARC held a combined work-day at our county EOC on Saturday December 11, with seven attending. We dusted off the vacuum-tube EMP-proof Heathkit SB-101 5-band SSB/CW 100-watt rig, and used it to check into the NFL ARES(R) 3.950 LSB net with good success. This was a new experience for several of our participants, and Leland Gallup AA3YB was busy explaining techniques and customs, answering a bevy of questions from our participants.



*David Huckstep W4JIR and new-Extra Amy Woods KO4IDO were our "Team #1"*

Next came the main event: fortifying ten more of our fabulous VHF/UHF/Public Service Go-Boxes with two key improvements: a locally-developed **polarity protection system** in the battery wiring, and badly needed insulation on exposed power terminals of both AC and DC systems. Our polarity concern was that even with power-pole connectors, it is very possible for a stressed volunteer to get connections backwards at the battery terminals -- and let the "magic smoke" out of a \$5,000 public service radio....which probably wouldn't endear our group to the Emergency Manager if it ever happened. We had made our own circuit boards with four p-channel MOSFETS in parallel, resulting in a combined series resistance down around 1.0 milli-ohm, creating a truly negligible voltage loss but preventing damage if power were backwards.

(See: <https://qsl.net/nf4rc/2021/PolarityProtectorPartOne.pdf> and <https://qsl.net/nf4rc/2021/ConstructionManual.pdf> )

During prototype installation, we had discovered that some power wiring inside the go-box had bare terminals-- so we used heat-shrink and electrical tape to protect all of the exposed power terminals.

These go-boxes are HEAVY and normally would be delivered by law enforcement, but we managed to move them all around our EOC by supporting them with rolling chairs.

This unexpectedly turned out to be a really good TRAINING event, because some of our volunteers didn't have much experience with 12-gauge DC wiring techniques, so we got even more benefit than planned.

*Dean Covey KV4RL (rear), Susan Halbert KG4VWI, and Stewart Reissener KK4DXF (front) were our 2nd of 3 groups.*



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We've now provided polarity protection for HF, VHF-data and VHF/UHF voice radios in our EOC backup radio room, and now a total of 11 go-boxes owned by the Sheriff's Department.

After all the work, we executed a speedy retreat to the nearby Sonny's restaurant and had a great meal together! Lots of fun stories!



## Alachua County ARES(R)/NFARC Moves to Groups.io Forum

by Gordon Gibby KX4Z

Thanks to participant **Mike Hasselbeck WB2FKO**, Alachua County ARES(R)/NFARC will give a try at the popular online forum system known as **groups.io**. At a recent meeting, Mike explained several advantage of this forum system, including:



- Participants can choose whether to get an email for each post, or a condensed type of "digest" of several versions, or even eliminate email and simply review on the web.
- Posts and files remain online and can be searched and studied later
- Discussions can be arranged in "topics"
- Viewing can be "by message" or "by topic"
- Topics that are "uninteresting" to a participant can be "muted"
- There is no cost to the group

*We're pretty green at this* but were surprised with dozens of persons on our extensive mailing list successfully took our "invitation email" and joined up! It appeared that most of the active participants were able to get into the system, so we may be able to retire our previous "email list" way of communicating.

If you would like to monitor or contribute to our discussions, please send an email to [docvacuumtubes@gmail.com](mailto:docvacuumtubes@gmail.com) indicating your interest. We're grateful to Mike for getting all of this set up and making the switch so incredibly easy! He also took on TWO sub-elements of our recent Extra Class course and presented the information in an innovative new way. The "group name" is NF4RC.



## Walton County Amateur Radio Club Invitation

All hams are invited to a **free Tail 'Gator** (pun intended)! There will be at no cost to you (donations accepted) for **Coffee, Donuts and Dogs!** Come grab a spot on **Saturday January 8<sup>th</sup> 2022** from **8:00 am to 2:00 pm**, drop your tailgates and open your trunks to **buy, sell, swap, trade** or even just to ragchew! This is an **ARRL Sponsored event** and is sure not to be one to miss. More information can be found at the **ARRL Website** at: <http://www.arrl.org/hamfests/wf4x-presents-coffee-donuts-dogs-tail-gator>



## What's happening? Santa Rosa County Edition

Arc Thames, W4CPD

At our November meeting we announced that our 2022 training plan would be focused on completing our individual [Florida ARES Taskbooks](#). These training sessions will be hands on and allow you the opportunity to complete your individual task sign-offs. Below are the classes we currently have scheduled.



At our January 15, 2022 meeting, we will cover message handling to include radiograms and ICS-213 forms. We will have hands on activities for how to pass traffic over the air as well as filling in the forms. **Breakfast will be provided.**



Our February meeting will focus on Winlink. We will start with a classroom session and then move to hands on training with various TNC's to use Winlink to send radiograms, ICS-213 forms, and shelter reports. Due to the length of this meeting, **breakfast and lunch will be provided.** We may not need the entire time, but we wanted to get it on your calendars just in case.

January 29/30, 2022 will mark Winter Field Day again. The team had a great time working this contest last year and are no doubt excited to participate in January. We took a vote and the resounding response was to host it for a second year at Bear Lake Campground in Munson, FL. All are welcome to participate and more information can be found on our website, [srcares.org](http://srcares.org).

For information on joining or participating in the Santa Rosa County ARES team, please reach out via email:

[info@srcares.org](mailto:info@srcares.org), visit our website [srcares.org](http://srcares.org), or [find us on Facebook](#).



## FCC Testing Information

### Hog County Amateur Radio Association, Bushnell FL

- First Saturday, 11:00 AM
- Cross Connection Church, 1451 West County Road 476, Bushnell, FL 33513
- Info: sumterVE@gmail.com

### Lake ARA, Leesburg FL

- Monthly on the 3rd Saturday, prior to monthly meeting. (Except December)
- 8:00 AM
- LARA Clubhouse (11146 Springdale Ave, Leesburg – off of CR 473)
- For more information and registration, contact: Dave Templeton N4NG, 386-804-2806 [n4ng@icloud.com](mailto:n4ng@icloud.com) in advance of the meeting.

### Lake Monroe ARS FCC Testing, Sanford FL (LMARS)

- Third Saturday of every month
- Seminole County Sheriff's Office, 100 Eslinger Way, 1st Floor, Sanford, FL
- Registration Required
- For more information and registration, contact Bob Cumming, W2BZY, 407-333-0690 or [w2bzy@cfl.rr.com](mailto:w2bzy@cfl.rr.com)

### Milton Amateur Radio Club, Milton FL

- Check date at [miltonarc.org](http://miltonarc.org)
- Walk-in
- Bagdad United Methodist Church
- Info: Chuck, N4QEP, [merlinman3@yahoo.com](mailto:merlinman3@yahoo.com)

### Orlando Amateur Radio Club

- First Wednesday
- 5:30 PM, Walk-ins allowed
- ARRL/VEC
- Central Florida Fairgrounds Craft Building, 4603 W Colonial Drive, East Gate off Fair Villa Road
- Info: [testing@orac.org](mailto:testing@orac.org), Robert Cumming, 407-333-0690

### Santa Rosa County FL ARES Testing (Walk-in)

- Information and dates can be found at [srcares.org](http://srcares.org)

### Seminole County

- Every month on the third Saturday
- 9:15 AM
- Seminole County Sheriff's Office off SR 17-92, on 100 Eslinger Way in Sanford, FL
- Info: Bob Cumming, W2BZY, [w2bzy@cfl.rr.com](mailto:w2bzy@cfl.rr.com)

### Silver Springs Radio Club, Ocala FL (SSRC)

- Go to <http://k4gso.us/class/> to signup for classes
- Go to <http://k4gso.us/test-signup/> for testing. Testing is held on the 2nd Tuesday of odd months at 7 PM.
- Note <http://k4gso.us/ncvec605/> is requested to be filled out before you show for testing. It is best to download the form and open it as a PDF so you can fill in the blanks.

### Suwannee ARC, Live Oak, FL

- First Tuesday of the month prior to the meeting
- Saturdays available with advanced notice
- N4SVC, 9707 58th Street, Live Oak, FL 32060
- [www.suwanneearc.org](http://www.suwanneearc.org) for more information

### Tallahassee Amateur Radio Society (TARS)

The Tallahassee Amateur Radio Society (TARS) has begun limited License testing. Please refer to the following for the updated testing dates and requirements for individuals wishing to take exams. <https://k4tlh.net/faq/license-testing/>

### West Volusia Amateur Radio Society

- Second Saturday of each odd numbered month
- 9:00 AM
- Elks Lodge, 614 S. Alabama Avenue, Deland, FL
- Info: <https://westvars.org/testing>

**This information is subject to change. Check with the testing venue to confirm the testing session.**

**Remember:** Bring photo ID, CSEs, copy of current license, exam fee in cash, \$15 exact change. Large print exams are available.

## NFL Web Site

For net, hamfest and other events go to [www.arrl-nfl.org](http://www.arrl-nfl.org). Webmaster Brian McClure, NW4R, maintains an up-to-date and detailed listing of all NFL nets and activities. If you need to make a change to an existing net or activity, or add a new one, you can contact Brian on the website.

## NFL Officials

**Section Manager** – Kevin Bess, KK4BFN

**Assistant Section Managers**

*Joseph D. Bushnel W2DWR*

*John C Reynolds W4IJJ*

*Jeff Capehart W4UFL*

*Neil Light KK4VHX*

*Ray Crepeau K1HG*

*Steve Szabo WB4OMM*

*Scott Roberts KK4ECR*

**Section Emergency Coordinator** – Arc Thames W4CPD

**Assistant Section EC** – Karl Martin K4HBN

**Section Public Information Coordinator**— Scott Roberts KK4ECR

**Section Technical Coordinator** – Frank Haas KB4T

**Affiliated Club Coordinator** – Appointment Pending

**Section Traffic Manager** – Helen Straughn WC4FSU

**Official Observer Coordinator** – Robert Leasko WB8PAF

**State Government Liaison** – Darrell Brock N4GOA

### Statewide Digital Radio Resources

**Did you know we have designated ARES DSAR Reflectors & a DMR Talkgroup?**

- **DSTAR Reflector 046**
  - o REF046A – Florida Statewide
  - o REF046B – NFL ARES
  - o REF046C – NWS Mobile, AL SKYWARN
- **DMR Florida State ARES TG 31127**

Feel free to link your local repeaters to help create a digital repeater network through the state!

Email your QST NFL input to [n4gl.marty@gmail.com](mailto:n4gl.marty@gmail.com), Marty Brown, N4GL, Editor. All submissions are subject to editing prior to publication.



Newsletter of the Northern Florida Section of the ARRL

1. Spread the word about our website [www.arrl-nfl.org](http://www.arrl-nfl.org) and **QST NFL** on your club web-site, in a newsletter or at a meeting.
2. Send a write-up and picture of your next activity.
3. Make sure you, or the appropriate member of your club is on the email reminder list.
4. Contact: Marty Brown N4GL, [n4gl.marty@gmail.com](mailto:n4gl.marty@gmail.com)

**QST NFL** is a monthly publication of the ARRL Northern Florida Section. **QST NFL** is intended for wide distribution within the NFL Section, including club Leaders and all licensed Amateurs in Florida. A current issue of this publication can be found at the ARRL Southeastern Division web site, Northern Florida Section. [www.ARRL-NFL.org](http://www.ARRL-NFL.org) Opinions expressed by writers are their own, and may not express the positions of the ARRL. Submissions may be made to the editor, Marty Brown, N4GL.MARTY@gmail.com. All submissions are subject to editing prior to publication.