



QST NFL



Sharing information of interest to Radio Amateurs in North Florida

Volume 9 Issue 9

www.arrl-nfl.org

September 2022

From the Shack of the Section Manager

Scott Roberts, KK4ECR (kk4ecr@gmail.com)

August has been a good month. Arc and I have been able to meet with (via Zoom) candidates for some of the open positions that we have in the section.

In August, I was able to attend the North Florida Amateur Radio Club meeting and present them with the *Special Service Club Certificate*. They had a great meeting and have good attendance. The program was excellent.

Earlier in August, I sent out an email giving a general outline of the goals and direction that Arc and I want to accomplish in our section. These were just an outline of what we want. As we start to work on each one, we will layout a more detailed plan on how we want to accomplish each item.

I am very pleased to announce that we have filled the position of Public Information Coordinator. Jim Bledsoe, K14KEA has accepted the appointment. Jim has a vast background in public relations and journalism and has already done a great job of promoting amateur radio in our section; and I know he will continue to be a great asset to our team.

I also attended the Huntsville Hamfest and was able to meet many of the leadership from the Southeast region. I got some good ideas from fellow Section Managers that will help in making our section even better.

In September:

I will be attending the Friendship ARC meeting in Ocala. I look forward to spending some time with them and learning how we can help them better their relationships in their area.

I will also be traveling to ARRL HQ for the Section Manager Training. I am looking forward to learning how I can be a better Section Manager and serve the members of our section. I hope to come back with many great ideas!

Scott Roberts, KK4ECR

Kk4ecr@gmail.com

904-759-7812 — Cell

904-602-9576 — Direct to Shack

5481 — Hamshack Hotline



What's Inside

- Page 2 [From the SEC](#)
- Page 4 [What's Happening? Santa Rosa County](#)
- Page 5 [Loften HS Relocates Club Station](#)
- Page 6 [Solar Panel Connector](#)
- Page 8 [Alachua County Tech Course](#)
- Page 9 [GARS Participates in Ribbon Cutting](#)
[QCWA Chapter 62](#)
- Page 10 [Homebrew Gear for Fox Hunting](#)
- Page 11 [Fox Hunt Offset Attenuator](#)
- Page 12 [Suwannee Amateur Radio Club](#)
- Page 13 [What's Happening? Alachua County](#)
- Page 15 [Okaloosa & Walton Counties](#)

If you have input for **QST NFL**, or would like to be added to (or removed from) the reminder list, contact Marty Brown, N4GL, Editor, n4gl.marty@gmail.com

All submissions are subject to editing prior to publication.

Continued on next page...

We are still looking to fill open positions.

- Assistant Section Managers
- Assistant Section Emergency Coordinators
- Public Information Officers as required
- Emergency Coordinators in counties as required

My plan is to bring on three Assistant Section Managers.

- ASM for Training,
- ASM in the more central part of our section,
- ASM in the western part of our section.

This will allow for the leadership of our section to be more involved in meetings and events in our entire section. I am already talking with a potential candidate for the ASM for Training – I hope to make an official announcement very soon.



From the NFL Section Emergency Coordinator

ARC Thames, W4CPD

Statewide Exercise October 1

Amateur radio operators from Florida's emergency communications teams will hold a simulated exercise called, "Service DENIED," on Saturday, October 1, 2022.

This exercise is based on a simulated statewide cyber-attack impacting communications infrastructure. Such attacks may strike with little or no notice unlike a hurricane. The slogan we all see, "When all else fails, ham radio," would truly pickup its real meaning with a full communications infrastructure outage.

Service DENIED will allow teams from various Florida counties to test their ability to communicate with the State Division of Emergency Management using only amateur radio equipment. In addition, individual amateur radio operators will assist in gathering situation reports and provide them to their local emergency management teams as well as the State using various voice and digital methods.

Teams will test their capability to provide health and welfare messaging for residents. This is a long-standing tradition allowing a resident to relay a message such as, "I'm ok," to their friends or family outside of the impacted area using a national traffic system.

This exercise will encompass radio communications teams from services such as the ARRL's ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service), RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service), and Florida AUXCOMM (Auxiliary Communications).

The exercise will run from 9:00 AM EDT to 11:30 AM EDT on Oct 1, 2022.

If your Florida based ARES, volunteer organization, or agency team would like to participate, please signup no later than September 10 using [this Google Form](#) (Please only one form per organization.) You can find your local county's ARES Emergency Coordinator [on our section website](#) if you aren't already affiliated with one.

More information can be found on our section website - <https://arrrl-nfl.org/set/>. The website includes the information currently available regarding the exercise including an overview, participants, and pre-requisite activities to prepare you and your team for the exercise. This is one exercise your team does not want to miss out on participating in.

Section ARES Report

In July our section reported 1,141 hours of volunteer time to various ARES duties within our section. Thanks to the following counties and EC/AEC's for reporting their time. The information provided by our team is consolidated and then forwarded to the ARRL.

Alachua-W4UFL Bay-KN4PFZ Citrus-K4SOP Clay-KK4ECR Duval-K4BJS Columbia-N5CBP Escambia-KB4HAH Flagler-KA4LEC Hernando-N9EE Leon-KC4NVU Marion-N2HAY Nassau-KA3OGG Okaloosa-W4KKJ Putnam-WF3F Santa Rosa-W4CPD Seminole-AI4NF St. Johns-WE4MJ Suwannee-KM4BTW Wakulla-W4KEF Walton-W4CJB Washington-WA4MN

Continued on next page...



	Number	Person-Hrs
Exercises this month:	11	225.00
Training events this month:	27	190.00
Public service events this month:	6	30.00
Community service events this month:	8	108.00
Emergency events this month:	0	0.00
SKYWARN events this month:	3	5.00
Meetings this month:	20	266.00
Unclassified events this month:	112	317.00

Our local county ARES teams need you! If you're interested in learning more about ARES in your county, visit the [County Emergency Coordinator](#) list on the section website to find the contact information for your county's Emergency Coordinator. Many of our counties offer monthly or quarterly training so it's a great opportunity to learn.

Monthly Radiogram Challenge

September's challenge is to send me, W4CPD, a Radiogram to share with me how you would find out if your help was needed during an emergency if all normal communications methods such as cellular, internet, and landline service were down. You may send your Radiogram via a voice net or utilize Winlink. Winlink is a software package that allows you to send messages and forms over the internet or using a compatible radio. You can find the step-by-step instructions to send a Radiogram using Winlink via [this link](#). The section website, arrl-nfl.org, has a net listing for voice nets if you wish to use voice. Many of these nets have a traffic representative/liaison that can pass your traffic up to a section net to allow the traffic to reach me.

If you have a local club newsletter, website, or social media presence, please share the monthly challenge out to help us spread the word. Full details can be found on our section website, arrl-nfl.org.

Unfortunately, I suffered a lightning strike at my home and my primary computer is currently down so I'm not able to share the participant list for August. My sincere apologies and we will share them once I gain access to the hard drive. I wanted to share a couple of important tips for sending a Radiogram. Remember, brevity is key. Think of each box or group within the form as costing you \$5 to send. This tactic really helped me keep my messaging concise. An op note is not required unless there are special delivery instructions that need to be conveyed such as "Deliver as ICS 213". The op note box is not a subject line like an email message. An official title is not required in the signature line unless from an agency representative.

Upcoming Training Opportunity

On Wednesday, September 7 at 6:30P EDT/5:30P CDT, the team from Radio Relay International (RRI) will conduct an online Zoom training session for us on "Basic Net Procedures". This is an excellent course and is free to participate in. To register for the course, please [use this link](#) to receive the meeting information.



October 7-8, 2022

Melbourne Auditorium
625 E Hibiscus Blvd
Melbourne, FL 32901

INFO

What's Happening? Santa Rosa County

ARC Thames, W4CPD

In August we continued our training series on completing ARES Taskbooks with a hands on training session on coax connectors and PowerPoles. Steve-W4SJV took us through the various types of coax connectors and the tools required to complete them properly. Thanks, Steve, for the great presentation! I also want to give a "shout out" of thanks to Josie-WD4DCL for always preparing a fantastic breakfast for the team to enjoy prior to our meetings.



Our meetings have been scheduled for the remainder of the year. We will have license testing following each meeting except the exercise on October 1. The fee to take a test element is \$10. If you pass you can take next level free. You must repay to retake an element. Candidates must come having a personal e-mail address and an FCC FRN (Federal Registration Number) along with a photo ID. As always, a free breakfast is provided before all of our meetings.

- September 10 - 9:00A Common ICS Forms
- October 1 - 8:00A (Statewide Simulated Emergency, no license testing)
- November 12 - 9:00A Assembling a go-kit
- December 10 - 9:00A TBD



For information on joining or participating in the Santa Rosa County ARES team, please reach out via email info@srcares.org, visit our website srcares.org, or [find us on Facebook](#).

HamCation Needs You!!

Michael Cauley, W4ORL, General Chairman

The largest hamfest in the southeast US, 2nd largest in the world needs your help! HamCation is managed and operated by volunteers. Without volunteers, HamCation would not be able to happen each year. It takes hundreds of volunteers each year to help run HamCation and 2023 is no exception.

We need volunteers to help with our Security, Onsite Ticket Sales, Special Event Station, SWAP Table area, Tailgate area, Forums, Hospitality, IT, and even driving our Golf Cart Shuttles. These just to name a few of the areas.

By volunteering for four hours in one day, we will provide you with an admission ticket that is good for all three days of the show. By volunteering at least 8 hours in one day, we will also provide you a meal ticket for lunch or dinner in our Volunteer Lounge.

We don't just need volunteers on the show days, we have opportunities to volunteer as early as the Monday before the show starts. You could even volunteer before the show starts, earn your ticket, and spend the next 3 days at the show.

For more information to include a description of each volunteer position needed and its duties and to sign up go to: www.hamcation.com/hamcation-volunteer Be sure to read the directions as each volunteer needs to submit the form and we asked that only one area is selected each day. If you want to volunteer in more than one area in a day, please submit a form for each position. You will then be contacted by the Chairman of the area you volunteer for to create a schedule based on your availability and our needs.



Loften High School Club Station Relocated

Bob Lightner, W3GJ

The William Travis Lofton High School HAM club station (K4WTL) has relocated across the hall and is back on the air. We have 14 new freshmen students who are learning about the hobby and will soon begin talking on the air. Our current club membership is 45. Many of our students will be studying for the Technician license and testing next month. We are fortunate to be located in Gainesville where there are several active HAM clubs and activities. We were recently gifted an Emergency Communications trailer with a tower and a Cushcraft A3 beam. Our Art Academy students will paint and letter the outside of this trailer and the Fire/EMS students will renovate the interior. The trailer will be used for Ecomm activities, Field Day, Hurricane shelter communications, etc. In the fall as weather cools, we plan on putting up a T-100 Alumatower, to replace our current 35-foot Rohn 6 tower. For more information about our club, look us up on QRZ.COM.



Solar Panel Connector

Brian Schultheis K4BJS

Duval County ARES had been looking for a waterproof, locking, good-quality connector that wasn't an Anderson Power Pole to use as a portable solar panel power connector. Having a connector that couldn't be mixed up with or crossed with the Anderson Power Pole 12 volt output (various colors notwithstanding) was an essential requirement. Someone suggested a connector used by some of the RV travel trailer manufacturers would be exactly what we were looking for. After some Googling and digging into the RV industry, I found out this was a 2 pin connector made by CnLinko. CnLinko specializes in waterproof power and signal connectors for a variety of industries and now amateur radio field operations. CnLinko connectors are not widely available, but we did find several vendors who carry the products. Only Productsforautomation.com (majorelectronix.com, 800-966-2345) seems to carry the entire line. Other online vendors carry some of the connectors either as a single item or you can find mating pairs also. On Ebay, cnlinko-usa and j_store68 are two of the sellers. And of course you can find the connectors on Amazon, iGreely and cnlinko store are some of the sellers with an Amazon store front.

The actual product line is the CnLinko LP-20 series power connector. Note these are the 20 amp type, not the 50 amp type. The 50 amp type connector looks similar, but has a divider between the pins. A few specifications for these are:

- 14-12 AWG wire size (12 AWG is a tight fit, UL 1015 and UL 1007 fit; UL 1426 does not fit)
- Solder cup termination
- IP65, IP67 when mated
- 20A current rating
- 500V maximum

For the pin out standard we choose Pin 1: positive and Pin 2: negative. The three connectors from the LP-20 series we choose are LP-20-C02PE-01-022, LP-20-J02SX-03-40, and LP-20-J02PP-01-00. Pin identification is easy with embossed numbers on the front and back of the insert. These have an integral sealing gland and strain relief in the back shell and go together easily. Although the LP-20 connectors are designed for round cable, you can use them with flat cable if you use rubber tape to build up the flat cable to an approximate round shape.

LP-20-C02PE-01-022 is the male plug attached to the solar panel cord. LP-20-J02SX-03-40 is the mating panel mounted female receptacle installed on equipment. Another idea we had was to have extension cords to give us an option about locating the solar panel. For these we use LP-20-J02PP-01-001 a wire mounted female receptacle on the first end and LP-20-C02PE-01-022 male plug on the second end.



PLUG, male, LP-20-C02PE-01-022



PANEL RECEPTACLE, Female, LP-20-J02SX-03-401



CORD RECEPTACLE, Female, LP-20-J02PP-01-001



Panel receptacle installed on a solar generator.



Wire mount plug and receptacle used to make an extension cord.

SM to Visit Friendship ARC, Ocala

Ken Simpson, W8EK

Scott Roberts, KK4ECK, our NFL section manager will be at our September 12 meeting, and will be doing a presentation. This meeting will be at the Sheriff's substation Southwest District Office, 9048 SW State Rd. 200, Ocala, FL 34481 on route 200, at 1:30 PM.

Please mark your calendar and plan on attending yourself. In addition, we ask that you spread the word to any other hams, or ham clubs, that you may know. We want to have a good turnout!

For more info: E-mail W8EK@FLHam.net or W8EK@arri.net
Voice Phone (352) 732-8400

***** SM Spotting *****

Free Tech Licensing Class Via Zoom

Rol Anders, K3RA

A free, weekly, live, Amateur Radio Technician Class Licensing course on Zoom will begin on Thursday, Sept 8, and will run through Thursday, October 20 (7 sessions). The three-hour sessions will start at 6:30 PM Eastern Time. These are the classes that we have been holding for years sponsored by the [National Electronics Museum](https://www.nationalelectronicsmuseum.org/). Those wishing to sign up should email me at roland.anders@comcast.net.

Alachua County Technician Course - Smashing Success!

by Gordon Gibby KX4Z NCS521

This almost slipped by us, but we set a deadline to hold a Technician Course and the calendar just keeps rolling on! Week-end of August 27/28 - 8AM-6PM Sat, 1PM-6PM Sun. Google "form" for signups. The big difference this time was that we are "fully enmeshed" with ESF#2 / Alachua County, so we submitted a "press release" dutifully to our Emergency Manag-



er -- and were blown away by the response! The County issued *their own press release and media publicity on our behalf* - <https://alachuacounty.us/news/Article/Pages/Alachua-County-Ham-Radio-Club-Offers-Weekend-Course-for-Amateur-Radio-FCC-License-Exam.aspx> and suddenly our Google Form **BLEW UP!** **We went from 11 or 12 registrations to Twenty-Nine in 48 hours!**

We had planned a LIMIT of 20 persons in the class, due to the room size of the EOC conference room and our ability to chaperon persons in the secure facility...so I immediately reworded the Google Form (changes take effect instantly) to indicate we were now taking WAITING LIST applicants. **Never had to do THAT before!!**

Our leadership team showed up an hour in advance and worked out the audio-visual, got sign-up sheets out, and got ready. The Tech questions have just changed and thankfully the ARRL had new Q&A slides -- but they had just come out a few weeks in advance of our course - we had been biting our nails. We unpacked some of our copious "show and tell" props for Techs and set up a full HF Go-Box station connected to our EOC HF Antenna.

The room filled to 3/4 of capacity as about 60% of the registrants showed up and our volunteer team of instructors went to work and did a FANTASTIC job. (See list below.) Teaching the Tech license is like a fire-hydrant to most participants...and we had them ON THE AIR to a 2-meter repeater, we had their email popping with a WINLINK message sent via a SHARES relay station in TEXAS to demonstrate disaster email, and the air was filled with SSB, CW and FT8 at every break in the schedule. Timing such a course is difficult (<https://qsl.net/nf4rc/2022/TechnicianCourseTiming.pdf>) but amazingly our instructors held to within single-digits of the schedule throughout. Pizza and delicious homemade pulled-chicken-and-rice (thanks, Emily!) were lunch fare so we kept the ball rolling with more live demos.

Sunday afternoon arrived and **there was a CAMERAMAN setting up a Tripod** while we were laying out a dozen pre-drilled 6-foot pressure-treated 1x2's for our signature Slim Jim Technician homebrew project. The local TV station picked up on the County promotion of our course and we had taped coverage of our training, as well as an interview on the 6PM and 11PM local TV station. <https://www.wcjb.com/2022/08/28/ncfl-residents-get-training-ham-radios-case-major-disaster/> TOTALLY unexpected and unprecedented for our ham radio courses, that we've been tuning for 5 years or more.

The HOMEBREW ANTENNA portion of the Tech course is mid-boggling. We had teams of 2 volunteers scrambling for an hour, cutting and stripping #14 house wire, threading it into a VHF stub and an end-fed folded dipole, then cutting, stripping and making RG-58 coax ready for connection. Out came the antenna analyzers as we tuned the taps on the VHF stub to match the high end-fed impedance down below 2:1 -- then students watched and learned as their coax got soldered on. All students got our handout - <https://qsl.net/kx4z/TwoMeterHomeMadeSlimJim.pdf>

Continued on next page...

Our course finished our 15 hours of marathon instruction with the "group" taking a "practice test" on ham-study.org -- and getting an impressive score of 97% -- only ONE missed question, they had picked up *so much* during the fast-paced training. They know they have to go home and review and practice test several times before the Real Thing, but I have a better feeling about this group than most of our previous courses.

Our incredible group of volunteer instructors (this is one of our techniques for growing leadership):

Jim Bledsoe KI4KEA - Extra, Evaluator - T0, T1
Brett Wallace NH2KW General - T3, T0
Emily Wallace KO4JWC General - T4
Eric Pleace KO4JWC Extra - T5 (and astonishing slides!)
Gordon Gibby KX4Z Extra, Evaluator - T6, T7, Antenna
Leland Gallup AA3YB, Extra T8, T9

During the course, we got Brett's new \$59 Windows laptop set up to become NH2KW-10, our 4th local VHF Win-link RMS server. Brett should be on the air soon. He plans to also add HF very quickly, making our 2nd HF Win-link Server in Alachua County.



GARS Participates in Waldo EOC Ribbon Cutting

Barbara Matthews, KO4TWZ

On Saturday, August 20th, city officials from the City of Waldo held the official Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the city's newly established Emergency Operations Center (EOC), which was created by a cooperative between the Gainesville Amateur Radio Society (GARS) and Waldo city officials. Present at the event was Mayor Louie Davis who, along with Waldo teen Sophie Funck, performed the ribbon cutting in front of Waldo citizens, honored guests and club members. The celebration was followed by tours of the EOC and then a great meal shared by all. This historical event initiates a cooperative whereby volunteers from GARS can operate their equipment in the EOC in support of the citizens of Waldo and surrounding areas in times of disaster or inoperable cell and internet communications. Many thanks to Kim Worley, Waldo City Manager and all those who made this event a success.



QCWA Chapter 62 Ocala Holds Meeting

Ken Simpson, W8EK, President

Ocala, FL, Chapter 62, held its regular scheduled meeting on August 25 at the China Lee Buffet. National Director Ken Simpson, W8EK, reviewed some of the topics discussed at the last board meeting. Chapter 62 also holds a net every Saturday morning at 9 AM local time on 3940 KHz. Everyone is invited to join us.

Pictured: N8AJU, KM4KKL, W8EK, K4GFQ, W1DOH, N4KPI, W8DYV,

Homebrew Gear for Fox Hunting

by Bert Garcia N8NN

A ham radio fox hunt is a radiosport activity where a hidden transmitter is found by using direction find equipment. The fox transmits on a known frequency at regular intervals while the participants, the hounds, use directional antennas to locate the fox. This article describes homebrew equipment you can use to conduct a fox hunt.

FOX - The fox should be a low powered transmitter that can send an intermittent signal and identify with the owner's callsign. Bert N8NN used a Baofeng handheld radio transmitting at 1 watt on the 2-meter band. A small digital recorder (1) was used to play an audio loop of CW tones and my callsign. The recorded audio loop was 30 seconds long followed by 30 seconds of silence. The transmit time should be long enough to allow the hounds to determine a direction to the fox. The period of silence allows the transmitter to cool off between transmissions.

The digital recorder output was fed into the handheld microphone connector and the VOX was turned on. To ensure the fox did not run out of battery power during the hunt, a large external battery was used for the handheld and a smaller external battery was used for the digital recorder. The fox was put into a plastic box and an information label was placed on the top of the box.



Figure 1. The Fox



Figure 2. Information label.

DIRECTIONAL ANTENNAS - Two different 3-element yagi antennas were constructed by Randy N1JOO and Bert N8NN. For direction finding the antenna pattern should have a narrow beamwidth and a high front-to-back ratio. The yagi design program YagiCAD (2) was used to optimize the element length and spacing that would create a directional pattern yielding a narrow beamwidth and a high front-to-back ratio. We chose a beamwidth of 66 degrees and a front-to-back ratio of 53 dB.

One yagi was constructed by Randy N1JOO using metal measuring tape elements and a PVC boom (3). The second yagi was constructed by Bert N8NN using aluminum rods and a wooden boom. The performance of the antennas appeared to be equal, and the materials cost was essentially the same.

In Figures 3 and 4 you can see the Offset Attenuators that are described below. They are mounted on the boom and powered by 9 volt batteries.



Figure 3. N1JOO's measuring tape yagi.

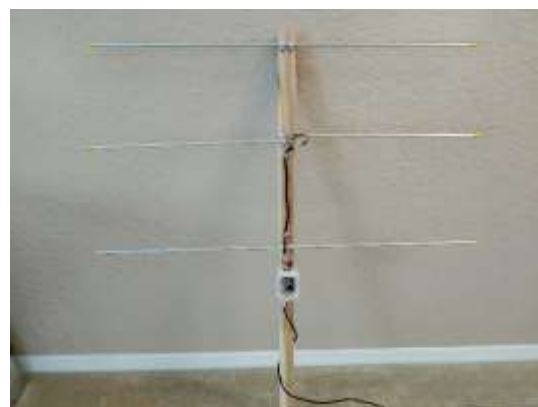


Figure 4. N8NN's aluminum rod yagi.

OFFSET ATTENUATOR - When the hound is close to the fox, the received signal is very strong, and the radio's S-meter is at full scale making it impossible to obtain a directional reading. An attenuator is needed between the radio and the antenna.

Continued on next page...

Inexpensive offset attenuator kits were obtained from John KC9ON (4). The offset attenuator generates a 4 MHz signal that is mixed with the received signal and the resulting offset appearing above and below the signal is lower in strength allowing the S-meter to give useful readings. For example, if the fox is transmitting on 147.000 MHz, the offset attenuator produces a signal at 143.000 MHz. The hound's radio is tuned to 143.000 MHz. The strength of the 4 MHz signal is varied as needed to control the S-meter reading. Tests showed that the offset attenuator allowed accurate directional readings to be had within 6 feet of the fox. More information about the offset attenuator kit is provided in a separate article.

In summary, organizing a Fox Hunt can be fun and rewarding for any group of hams. Constructing the equipment is relatively inexpensive. If you conduct a Fox Hunt, be sure to include a large amount of food and drink for consumption after the hunt. Enjoy!

1. Digital recorder. <https://tinyurl.com/6zcph2kt>
2. YagiCAD. <http://www.yagicad.com/>
3. Measuring tape yagi. <https://n5dux.com/ham/tape-measure-yagi/>
4. Offset Attenuator. <https://kc9on.com/product/fox-hunt-offset-attenuator/>



Fox Hunt Offset Attenuator

By Bert Garcia N8NN

There is an amateur radio activity called a "Fox Hunt". A hidden low-powered transmitter, the Fox, sends an identification signal at regular intervals on a known frequency. Participants try to find the Fox using direction finding equipment. The first person or team who finds the Fox wins the event. Usually, the Fox transmits on the 2-meter or 70-centimeter band because directional antennas can be reasonably small and portable, and handheld radios for those bands are common. A homemade yagi antenna is popular and inexpensive to make for Fox Hunting [1,2,3,4].

Your hunt goes well until you close in on the Fox. The Fox signal becomes so strong that you can no longer find a peak or null with your antenna. The solution is to use an offset attenuator such as the one sold by John Clements KC9ON [5]. This device generates a 4.00 MHz signal that will mix with the Fox signal to produce another weaker signal offset at plus or minus the Fox frequency. For example, if the Fox is on 146.700 MHz, the offset signal will be received at 142.700 and 150.700. The strength of the offset signal can be adjusted using the potentiometer so that a peak or null can be heard.

KC9ON's kit costs \$10 and can be built in less than an hour. The documentation is clearly written and includes step-by-step instructions with diagrams to show parts locations. Install the attenuator between your yagi antenna and your handheld radio. CAUTION: Do NOT transmit into the attenuator! You will damage the attenuator, and you may damage your radio.



Figure 1: The assembled offset attenuator.



Figure 2: Closeup of the offset attenuator.

Building a directional antenna and this offset attenuator is a fun project for your local club or group. Organize a Fox Hunt and have fun!

1. Fox hunt ham radio hidden transmitting hunting, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQSiTqH9Dzw>.
2. WB2HOL Tape Measure Beam Kit, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQSiTqH9Dzw>.
3. Tape Measure Yagi Beam Antenna, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmHoQrDfw-0>.
4. Tape Measure Beam, http://www.oparc.net/attachmates/ardf/WB2HOL_TapeMeasureAntenna.pdf.
5. Fox Hunt Offset Attenuator, \$10 kit, <https://kc9on.com/product/fox-hunt-offset-attenuator/>.

Suwannee Amateur Radio Club

Steve Kostro, N2CEI

It has been a few months since we have reported to “QSL NFL” but the club has been busy with activity. Besides our monthly first Tuesday night meetings, the club has been involved with weekend activities including station maintenance at the clubhouse, various small projects, and operating some of the sponsored contests starting with getting our new licensed operators involved with the ARRL Rookie Roundup in April. The club has also installed a beginners Net Control operation with our newer members taking turns running our Thursday night Net on our N4SVC repeater on 145.410 -.6 PL 100. Also on our repeater we have a “Get Together” net run by our clubs Vice President KD4AMP on Wed. nights at 8PM. Anything goes on that net!



The “Old Timers” operated in the CQ WWWPX SSB contest in March. Other contest operations included the ARRL’s International Digital Contest, the June VHF Contest, the 222 MHz and up Contest and of course, Field Day (it’s not a contest) of which we had 12 different members operating 5 positions with Emergency power. We also operated in the CQ’s sponsored CQWW VHF contest. Many other operation events occurred such as Feld Hell, 10-10, VHF Sprints, and the 13 Colonies. N4SVC is also one of the Net Control Stations for the Florida Weak Signal Society (FLWSS) that conducts its net on 432.090 MHZ. on Thursday nights at 8:30PM local. Basically, the club station is always active on some band most of the time including a 6M beacon as part of the FLWSS network of VHF and above beacons on 50.0667 (CW).

Our latest construction project has been a 2M (144 MHz) EME (Earth–Moon–Earth) station of which we will post pictures of after completion with some details of its performance. Then for the last weekend of Aug, the club operated as a two transmitter station in the World Wide Digital DX contest of which the club won 1st place in the Single Transmitter class last year. It’s always a fun time at the clubhouse during these events with food and friends that share the same interest.

At our October meeting this year, the club will be celebrating our 9th year at our Clubhouse with food, fun, and festivities with invited non-members attending. Hopefully, they will possibly become future members. We will also announce the winner of the Clubs QSL card design contest. It will all be announced on our website at suwannearc.org. Then while visiting our basic website, take time to review our “N4SVC Station Antenna Tour” found under the Club Files section of the Website. If anyone desires any additional information about our club, contact anyone listed under the “About Us” heading and we will be as helpful as we can.

Thanks for reading, hope to work you and 73!



What's Happening...in Alachua County!

By Gordon Gibby KX4Z

All kinds of good stuff! Our sister club to NFARC, GARS (Gainesville Amateur Radio Society) just held a “ribbon cutting” ceremony for their new Radio Room in what would likely serve as an EOC in the event of a disaster in the city of Waldo, in the northeast corner of Alachua County. Vann Chesney, AC4QS ably leads their group and multiple Alachua County hams, including some ARES® badged volunteers have served ably to advance ham radio through GARS. I'll stop there as I'm pretty sure Barbara is writing a great article on their progress! (But I wanted to be sure they got credit.)



The ARRL recognized the NFARC club (which was created specifically to support ARES®) as a **Special Service Club** (for all the myriad assets and efforts we do) – and Section Manager Scott Roberts KK4ECR made a special trip to our in-person meeting to present the banner and certificate to Jeff Capehart EC. *Thanks!*

We've got over 2-dozen “improvement plans” for deficiencies discovered through our 2F Field Day event, even though we made a 40% improvement over last year. Navy preparedness-exercise expert Brett Wallace NH2KW held discussions of our AARIP over two meetings and secured point-persons for almost every issue. One of the biggest points was the lack of an Ops or Logistics chief PRIOR to the Field Day. Craig Fugate KK4INZ discussed improvements for creature-comfort for our “incident command post” (which worked GREAT but was mightily beset by heat and mosquitoes). Possible Solution: MARC Chief Kevin Rulapaugh KE4NVI may be able to get us an air-conditioned command trailer for that.

Stepping up to the plate, Jim Bledsoe KI4KEA, also a county IT expert, has gotten all of our top leadership their own individual Alachua County email addresses, access to security training, and positioning within the County email system as valued volunteers. And our Emergency Manager got us two NEW laptops for our connection to the County secured network, and also air-gapped for connection to the radios. That brings us to FOUR working laptops, astonishing for us.

That wasn't enough accomplishment for Jim, **so he built our very first GPS-disciplined, internet-independent NTP (network time protocol) server** – a BIG need for our air-gapped MESH network at Field Day. Yah, Jim! An Improvement Plan already finished!!

Leland Gallup AA3YB and David Huckstep W4JIR hit it all the way to the MOON with a **complete rewiring and re-organization of our messy cramped radio room**....installed a TON of antenna gear and hand-made jumper cables everywhere, moving batteries to safe charging storage, organizing three HF systems, and 3 VHF/UHF systems, so that ANY antenna can be selected, or grounded, with just a switch. They donated all the rather significant costs right out of their pockets. The radio room is SPOT-LESS!!! Leland also spearheaded an experiment that proved a problem with our PACTOR modem has been solved.



Continued on next page...

To further push our Training Program, Jeff Capehart W4UFL, EC, held one of our MOST POPULAR tech nights ever – 18 people joined to hear him explain in very hands-on terms how to install and use WINLINK all the way through TELNET (but not radios) – and how to comply with the monthly training Radiogram through RRI. Immediately **three more radiograms got sent** – Alachua County is up to 14 radiograms or more at this time. We had leaders from more than our county learning from Jeff! And to put the icing on the cake, we had TWENTY-NINE people signed up for our end-of-the-month Technician weekend marathon course. And we have a great team of volunteer instructors. See separate article on that – we ended up on TV!



Our little school ham club is still in business, attracting a handful of middle school students – and surprise surprise, they want to learn MORSE CODE! Apparently that age groups loves SECRETS! So Lorain Roberts KO4LBS (who just got a new 7300) stepped up to the plate to volunteer to take over the young person's ham club for that task! Way to go, Loralyn! The sign-ups just busted two digits!!

And Stewart Reissener KK4DXF unveiled his **hand-built beautiful wooden go-boxes** for our EOC radios – with hand-made close-fitting front and back, shelf, locks and carry handles, custom built to fit right into our existing radio shelves, so the radio can just be lifted out if we have to do continuity of operations in a time of distress. An item from our Integrated Preparedness Plan coming to fruition!



The diesel generator is such a weighty issue (a pun!) that I'll reserve it for its own article, next month – suffice it to say that it taught me a LOT about inexpensive small, air-cooled Diesel Engines.... We're just having GREAT FUN in Alachua County!!

Okaloosa & Walton Counties!

DJ Stewart, KI4ZER,

Pres. [Playground ARC](#), Pres. [Walton County ARC](#), Vice Pres. [North Okaloosa ARC](#), Member of [Walton County ARES](#), Supporter of [NWFL Ham Radio](#)

Hi folks! There is always a lot going on in the areas of Okaloosa and Walton County! With so much occurring and so many great hams from all walks of life communicating as one, the Hamventures are nothing short of pure energy, technical skill and enthusiasm!

The meetings that are on a normally recurring basis are as follows:

- **Walton County Amateur Radio Club** – 1st Tuesday of the month, Business Meeting – All are welcome!
- **Walton County Amateur Radio Club Monthly Breakfast** – Saturday preceding the monthly business meeting. All are invited! This is at 4 C BBQ on 331 at Interstate 10 in Defuniak Springs FL!
- **Playground Amateur Radio Club** – 1st Thursday of the month, Tech Night – All are welcome!
- **North Okaloosa Amateur Radio Club** – 2nd Thursday of the month, Business Meeting – All are welcome!
- **Walton County ARES** – 3rd Thursday of the month, regular ARES Meeting, Training and hands on! All are Welcome!
- **Playground Amateur Radio Club** – 3rd Thursday of the month, Business Meeting – All are welcome!
- **Okaloosa County ARES** – 3rd Saturday of the Month, regular ARES meeting, Training & planning! All are welcome!
- **Playground Amateur Radio Club** – Sunday Pile Up, each Sunday scheduled for 3 PM CDT but some come early, everyone is welcome!
- **North Okaloosa Amateur Radio Club** – 4th Thursday of the month, Tech Night – All are Welcome!

Addresses and times:

- **NOARC** - 4565 Live Oak Church Road, Crestview, Florida at 7 PM CDT
- **PARC** - 17 First St SE, Fort Walton Beach, Florida, 730 PM CDT
- **OC-ARES** - 90 College Ave, Niceville, FL 2 PM CDT
- **WCARC** - 312 College Ave, Defuniak Springs, Florida, 700 PM CDT doors open, Meeting at 730 PM CDT
- **WCARES** - 95 S. Davis Lane, Defuniak Springs Florida, 730 PM CDT

Here's the brief! * Some pictures on the last page!

Aug 2nd 2022 the WF4X Club held their Monthly business meeting. There they decided to change their breakfast to the last Saturday of the month preceding the 1st Tuesday of the Month's Business Meeting. The breakfast is located as indicated above. Stay tuned to this crowd as they begin to plan for more high energy events to include engaging with multiple Clubs for an all ham dinner, Winter Field Day, a January tailgate and more!

Aug 4th 2022 the PARC team gathered with many guests in Fort Walton Beach for tech night. This event was dedicated to a Wi-Fi Antenna made from nothing more than spare parts and a soup can. The technical discussion showed off a waveguide calculator, the tools needed and a physical example as well as a greatly laid out representation on utilizing a Wi-Fi Soup can and how it could be beneficial in areas where signals are low or weak apart from RF.

Aug 7th 2022 was the PARC Sunday Pile-Up! DX was worked and contacts were abundant! On top of the communication more progress on the Clubhouse was made. This team is really hard charging and organized to say the least. Each Sunday they make improvements to their Organization, facilities and team!

Aug 11th 2022 was the NOARC Business Meeting! They discussed everything under the sun from old projects to new including improvements and antenna repairs and back again for their highly anticipated Hamfest on October 15! Great prizes were approved and purchased as well as confirming that there are multiple National Vendors that will be in attendance to include Tower Electronics and Rick the Sign Man! More are signing up and this is the best bang for the buck Hamfest at just \$5.00 entry and \$5.00 per table/spot! For more details head over to [W4AAZ.Org](#)

Aug 14th 2022 takes us back to PARC for another weekly Pile-up! From Mailbox installs to Club shirts on order and DX to the Moon and Back these folks are generating a lot of interest! Their testing is upcoming and they orchestrate it with ease! If you are looking to test with PARC check their exams page at [W4ZBB.Org](#)

Continued on next page...

Aug 16th 2022 and we find ourselves at WCARES! A full presentation o D-RATS was given along with hands on instruction for communicating via DSTAR capable radios. IT was fun and well laid out and everyone learned some new tricks! This group is even offering testing at the Walton County EOC on Sep 15th 2022. Check out N4EMA.Wordpress.com for more!

Aug 18th 2022 takes up to the PARC Business meeting and if you can't tell with all of the sprucing up of the place and active management of the equipment they are planning on some unexpected things! PARC has brought back an event from their past and invites you to the Club's Open house during the "Boondocks Swampfest" November 19th 2022! This is a free event and PARC is ready to host you! See the banner at the end of this wrote up for more details!

Aug 20th 2022 took some members to the Okaloosa County ARES. Unfortunately I was unable to attend and missed out on key information. But Robert KM4VKY said that he presented and went over Radiograms and the ICS – 213. New faces were there in the interest in Ham Radio and obtaining their license.

Aug 21st 2022 and guess where? That's right, PARC's Sunday Pile up again! This is a weekly venture and it is always jam packed with fun and exciting contacts. The best part, not always is it the same people showing up to help out or communicate! Sometimes the visitors are people who want to know more about our beloved hobby and this date was surely no let down for visitors as the Club Membership took the time to educate them about radio programming and licensing!

Aug 25th 2022 and off the Crestview we go with the folks at NOARC! What a tech night this was and to a packed house none the less! KK4WDQ presented JS8 and JS8 Call! This was even done live on ZOOM which had a great sized audience of its own! The entire hour was filled with great information and instructional presentation on how to get into JS8, setting up the rig, antenna, programming and communicating! These keyboard to keyboard messages over RF are truly interesting and useful during instances with low power and potentially damaged antennas! What a cool night this was at NOARC!

Aug 28th 2022 and we close out the month but alas where? Well it's a Sunday so at PARC! But before we went there we stopped by and helped out another ham who needed some assistance with rotor and wire antenna. This short tasks was completed in no time flat and the members then went on to the Pile up to work DX (to Brazil and beyond along with participating the Kansas QSO Party), Clean up a wire mess and reorganize some of their station equipment!

During all of these travels there are many points of interest and enjoyable activities. Recently, I was asked to come up with a brief as to what Amateur Radio is. While you and I could expound upon this exponentially, challenge was to keep it to a brief for only a few minutes on this topic.

What is Amateur 'Ham' Radio? Really? *(Editor's Note: Club PIO's take note of this explanation of Ham Radio)*

Amateur Radio, or Ham Radio, is a technical hobby that focuses on radio frequency transmissions and receptions of conversations, traffic of communication and vital information. But hold on! Before I lose you there is more than just the drab and similar rigmarole of the typical Ham Radio brief. That is, Ham Radio is also an exceptionally social hobby, profession and lifestyle! That's right! Ham Radio can be a way of life. Not to impart that it should take over every ounce of time you have to spare, but it can be a very positive and enjoyable practice. Through this hobby, many have met some of the best friends and closest people they have ever known at Club Meetings, Training Nights, Outings, Testing, Field Work and even at Ham Radio Sales dubbed 'Hamfests'! These connections range from school age children to professionals, people in the Military from all branches and active professionals from Doctors, Lawyers, Politicians, Local Business Owners, Law Enforcement, retirees and even the night manager of a local Burger Joint!

Together, all of these people and more make up a community network that is proud to serve voluntarily while investing their own time and money to assist in making communities more resilient not only to disaster, but to growth and expansion. The continued economic impact of Amateur Radio brings awareness to multiple organizations and focuses on fellowship, social involvement, public representation, and civic engagement. The people that take up these roles are the type to help you out with a flat tire on the side of the road, attend meetings in communities that are looking to expand and provide a voice for change and prosperity while preserving the past!

Apart from all of the social, local, political and business engagements, Amateur Radio Operators participate in practicing skills in communications from permanent fixed location and rapid deployment capabilities. This is to pass messages of essential information for 2nd and 1st responders to anything from a fender bender or an area wide cellular network outage. Amateur Radio Operators take official training classes and report weather anomalies, road and byway hazards, incidents of all nature and participate in signal seeking which can aid in location tracking or signal identification just to name a few.

We communicate all over the world! This can be done by line of site, point to point, with machines called repeaters. We can also bounce signals off of clouds, atmospheric layers, satellites and even the moon with ease and communicate with specifically developed computer software Programs and keep the signals going without the need for the internet!

It does not take much training to learn how to operate at the basic level and Amateur Radio Operators are always willing to showcase their skills while giving you a microphone and/or keyboard! If you are interested even in being an associate of these people, please consider attending a meeting in your area! You will be greeted with a smile and a free tour of what it is all about!

Enjoy Amateur Radio and
as always, Ham On!



A poster for 'Boondocks Swampfest' set against a background of a swampy forest with large trees and a body of water. In the top left corner is a circular logo for 'PARC PLAYGROUND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB FORT WALTON BEACH FLORIDA SERVING OUR COMMUNITY'. The text 'Playground Amateur Radio Club PRESENTS' is in the upper center. The word 'RAFFLE' is written diagonally in the top right. The main title 'BOONDOCKS SWAMPFEST' is in large, bold letters, with 'BOONDOCKS' in yellow and 'SWAMPFEST' in white. Below the title, the date and time are listed: 'Saturday November 19, 2022', '8 AM to 3 PM', and 'Down Home BBQ!'. At the bottom, it says 'Admission FREE! Donations Accepted, Open your Trunks/Tailgates!' and the address '17 First Street SE, Fort Walton Beach, Florida, 32548'.

Surprise a Tailgate this coming weekend!

Labor Day Tailgate

Sponsored by the

Chipola Amateur Radio Club

Saturday September 3rd

9 am until

2691 Endeavor Blvd, Marianna FL

Indoor tables available on a limited basis. So bring your tables, pop-up shelters, or just your tailgate. We have plenty of room outdoors. There is no cost for indoor or outdoor spaces. Just show up with your sale items!!

Hotdogs, chips & drinks available for a
Donation

contact freq. w4bkd 146.670 no tone

Questions call Darvin Owens wb4dlx 850-445-4197

A poster for the 'ANNUAL HAMFEST Event' featuring the Great Seal of the State of Florida in the center. The seal depicts a woman holding a torch, a ship, and a palm tree, with the text 'GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA' and 'IN GOD WE TRUST'. The date '15 OCTOBER 2022' is in the top right. The event name 'ANNUAL HAMFEST Event' is in large, stylized letters. At the bottom, the location '1446 COMMERCE DR CRESTVIEW, FL' and time '8 AM TO 2 PM' are listed, along with the website 'W4AAZ.ORG'. There are two small logos at the bottom: one for 'NOARC' and another for a radio-related organization.

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 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

Milton Amateur Radio Club, Milton FL

- Check date at miltonarc.org
- Walk-in
- Bagdad United Methodist Church
- Info: Chuck, N4QEP, 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, Robert Cumming, 407-333-0690

Santa Rosa County FL ARES Testing (Walk-in)

- Information and dates can be found at 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

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 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/fag/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. Webmaster Kari 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 – *Scott Roberts KK4ECR*

Assistant Section Managers

Kevin Bess, KK4BFN

Helen Straughn, WC4FSU

Section Emergency Coordinator – *Arc Thames W4CPD*

Section Public Information Coordinator – *Jim Bledsoe, KI4KEA*

Section Technical Coordinator – *Frank Haas KB4T*

Affiliated Club Coordinator –

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!

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 arrl-nfl.org website newsletter tab.

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



Newsletter of the Northern Florida Section of the ARRL

Marty Brown, N4GL, Editor
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 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.