



# QST NFL

Newsletter for the Northern Florida Section

## Come join the FUN!

Volume 11 Issue 5

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

May 2024

### From the Shack of the Section Manager

Scott Roberts, KK4ECR ([kk4ecr@gmail.com](mailto:kk4ecr@gmail.com))

Well, it's that exciting time of year again! As we welcome the warmer weather, let's also embrace the crucial roles and exciting opportunities ahead with **hurricane season** and **Field Day!**

#### Be Prepared for Hurricane Season

June marks the start of hurricane season when our preparation and readiness truly shine. As members of the Northern Florida Section, we are responsible for supporting our served agencies and community in times of need. Here's how you can gear up:

- 1. Check Your Equipment: Ensure All Communication Gear is in Top Shape** – Our communication tools are our lifeline during emergencies. Here's how to ensure they are in the best condition:
  - **Radios:** Test all amateur radios for functionality. Check frequency outputs and input sensitivity.
  - **Antennas:** Inspect antennas for any wear and tear. Ensure they are securely mounted and free of corrosion.
  - **Power Sources:** Test all batteries, generators, and alternative power supplies. Ensure they hold a charge and function efficiently under load conditions. Taking time to check and maintain our equipment thoroughly means we can rely on it when it matters most.
- 2. Update Your Emergency Kit: Stock Up on Essentials** – A well-prepared emergency kit can make a difference in a crisis. Here's what to include:
  - **Batteries and Power:** Extra batteries are available for all devices, and solar chargers or hand-crank chargers are also considered.
  - **Water and Food:** Store at least a three-day water supply (one gallon per person per day) and non-perishable, easy-to-prepare food.
  - **First Aid Supplies:** Include a comprehensive first-aid kit with bandages, antiseptics, a thermometer, and necessary medications.
  - **Important Documents:** Keep copies of critical documents, such as identification, insurance policies, and medical records, in a waterproof container. This kit will support your



personal safety and enhance your ability to help others during disasters.



- 3. Practice Your Skills: Engage in Local Drills and Exercises** – Practical experience is invaluable. Participating in drills will:
  - **Enhance Coordination:** Improve your communication and coordination with other amateur operators and emergency responders.
  - **Test Readiness:** This will allow you to operate under simulated emergency conditions to identify any gaps in your skills or equipment.

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- **Building Confidence:** Increase your confidence in handling real-life emergencies effectively. Regular drills ensure that our skills remain sharp and our response times quick.

Remember, our preparedness empowers us to make a profound impact, helping our neighbors when they need us the most.

### Field Day: Showcasing Our Capabilities

Let's also gear up for THE event celebrating our skills and community spirit: Field Day! Scheduled for the last FULL weekend in June, Field Day is not just a routine event—it's a vibrant showcase of our capabilities, a crucial test of our preparedness, and a fun gathering for all. Here's why Field Day is a highlight of our year:

**1. Demonstrate and Inspire: Highlighting the Role of Amateur Radio** – Field Day is our chance to step into the spotlight and show the vital role amateur radio plays in emergency communications:

- **Public Demonstration:** We'll set up stations and operate under simulated emergency conditions. This visibility lets the public see firsthand how we manage communications without relying on standard networks.
- **Educational Outreach:** By engaging with visitors, we can explain how amateur radio works and discuss its importance during disasters. This is a perfect moment to inspire new enthusiasts and possibly recruit new members.
- **Showcase of Skills and Commitment:** Our expertise and dedication are on full display, proving that our hobby is about personal passion and serving the greater good. This dynamic exposure helps elevate the understanding and appreciation of amateur radio within the broader community.

**2. Hone Our Abilities: Simulating Real Emergency Situations** – Field Day provides a controlled environment where we can enhance our readiness for real emergencies:

- **Realistic Simulations:** We operate in conditions that mimic the challenges faced during actual disasters, such as power outages, remote setups, and non-standard operating environments.
- **Skill Refinement:** This is the time to test new equipment, experiment with different antennas, and practice alternative communication methods like digital modes and satellite communications.
- **Collaboration Practice:** Working closely with fellow hams, we refine our ability to coordinate swiftly and efficiently, a critical component during actual emergency responses. Field Day is not just practice; it's a critical audit of our operational capabilities and readiness.

**3. Community and Fun: Celebrating Our Spirit and Resilience** – Field Day embodies the spirit of community and the joy of sharing our passion:

- **Community Gathering:** It's a festive atmosphere where members, families, and friends come together. We celebrate what we do and who we are as a community.
- **Activities for All Ages:** From radio demonstrations to informational booths and interactive activities, there's something for everyone. It's a family-friendly event that entertains and educates.
- **Building Bonds:** Beyond radios, this day strengthens the bonds among members and the wider community. It's a chance to network, share stories, and enjoy camaraderie. Field Day reflects our resilience and is a testament to our commitment to being ready and responsive.

#### Invite and Ignite Interest

Let Field Day be the platform where we invite the public to witness the power of amateur radio. It's a fantastic opportunity for others to see our impact and possibly inspire new members to join our ranks. Spread the word and let's make this Field Day an unforgettable showcase of our passion and purpose!

#### Let's Rise to the Challenge!

As we prepare for these significant events, let's channel our energy into being thoroughly prepared and vibrantly showcasing our capabilities. Whether fortifying ourselves for the hurricane season or setting up for Field Day, our efforts make a crucial difference. We are more than a community; we are a force for good, ready to tackle challenges and support each other.

**Let's step into this season with enthusiasm and determination, ready to make a positive impact and demonstrate the incredible potential of our amazing hobby!**

Thank you for allowing me to be YOUR Section Manager.



## NFL Officials

### Section Manager

Scott Roberts KK4ECR

### Assistant Section Managers

Kevin Bess KK4BFN

Helen Straughn WC4FSU

DJ Stewart KI4ZER

Joe Bassett, W1WCN

### Section Emergency Coordinator

Arc Thames W4CPD

### Section Public Info Coordinator

Jim Bledsoe, KI4KEA

### Section Technical Coordinator

Frank Haas KB4T

### Section Affiliated Club Coordinator

### Section Traffic Manager

Helen Straughn WC4FSU

### Section Official Observer Coordinator

Robert Leasko WB8PAF

### Section State Government Liaison

Darrell Brock N4GOA

## NFL Committees

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

Kari McClure, NW4R

### Newsletter, *QST NFL*

Marty Brown, N4GL

*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 contributors 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](mailto:N4GL.MARTY@gmail.com).

All submissions are subject to editing prior to publication.

### Looking for Something?

Gordon Gibby, KX4Z, has taken the time to index the articles from all the 2021 issues of *QST NFL*!

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

## ARRL Club Grant Program to Return

The [ARRL Foundation Club Grant Program](#) is returning for 2024. After receiving additional funding from Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC), the next round of grants will be available later this year. More than \$500,000 in grants have been awarded to clubs across the country. This program centers around club projects that are transformational in nature (i.e., projects that have the greatest impact on the local community). Previously successful grants concentrated on the recruitment and training of new hams, STEM programs, emergency preparedness, and amateur radio technology development. ARRL Director of Development Kevin Beal, K8EAL, said, "ARRL is proud to partner with ARDC to administer the Club Grant Program. These grants offer an opportunity to have a significant impact on amateur radio's future."

More information will be announced on all ARRL news outlets in the coming weeks. Now is the time for your club to consider if you have a project that could qualify for a grant. Start thinking just how your club can impact amateur radio, today and in the future. Grants will be available for up to \$25,000 and will include reporting and media requirements. Stay tuned for additional information, and get ready for the next round of the Club Grant Program.

Gainesville Amateur Radio Society's (GARS) winning Grant: [LINK TO GRANT PROPOSAL](#)

### NFL Section Member of the Month!

We are accepting nominations for the NFL Section Member of the Month. To submit a nomination, please send an email to Section Manager Scott Roberts at [kk4ecr@gmail.com](mailto:kk4ecr@gmail.com). Include the nominee's name, call sign, county, reason for the nomination, and a photo of the nominee. Arc and I will review the nominations and reach out to you if we have any questions.

### Digital Library of Amateur Radio & Communications

Marty Brown, N4GL

Digital Library of Amateur Radio & Communications is now archiving *QST NFL* issues. DLARC is a project of the Internet Archive (the not-for-profit online library best known for The Wayback Machine.) DLARC is growing to be a massive online library of the past and present of ham radio and related communications. It is funded by a grant from Amateur Radio Digital Communications. You can see what we have so far at <https://archive.org/details/dlarc>.

Three years of [QST NFL are now online](#), and I am working with the curator, Kaye Savetz, K6KJN, to eventually get all the issues that I have edited since 2014. DLARC can also scan paper issues. So if you have any stashed in your attic, let m know.



## From the Section Emergency Coordinator

Arc Thames, W4CPD

As hurricane season approaches, it's crucial for both individuals and our ARES teams in Northern Florida to prioritize preparedness. Personally, ensuring your emergency kit is stocked, evacuation plans are in place, and communication channels are established can make all the difference when faced with a severe weather event.

For our ARES teams, thorough equipment testing is paramount, especially leading up to the start of hurricane season. Regularly checking our equipment, including go-kits, is crucial to supporting our communities when they need it most. Make sure to regularly test any equipment that isn't utilized often. Make sure emergency batteries are still able to hold a charge and operate for the appropriate duration time needed. Have any state parks nearby? Take your HF go-kits and batteries out and operate POTA (parks on the air.) POTA is a great way to test your emergency gear and have fun at the same time.

Let's approach this season with vigilance, readiness, and a commitment to serving our neighbors with the utmost dedication. By being proactive in our preparations and ensuring our equipment is in top condition, we can better fulfill our mission of providing emergency communication services during times of crisis. Together, let's make safety our priority and stand ready to assist our communities in the face of any challenges that may arise during this hurricane season.

### **\*\*ARES Emergency Coordinators\*\***

I am actively working with the State Division of Emergency Management on a communications test date. This will likely end up being on a Saturday in early June and will provide us an opportunity to conduct a simulated emergency test. As soon as I have a firm date, I will notify you.

### **Monthly ARES Statistics**

In March 2024, ARES volunteers in our section reported 2,321 hours. Thanks to the Emergency Coordinators who submitted their monthly report and for all of you that have volunteered and contributed to those hours.

	Number	Person-Hrs
Exercises this month:	13	110.00
Training events this month:	23	296.50
Public service events this month:	4	309.00
Community service events this month:	9	972.00
Emergency events this month:	0	0.00
SKYWARN events this month:	0	0.00
Meetings this month:	19	374.80
Unclassified events this month:	46	259.00

#### **Call signs of DECs/ECs reporting:**

K4SOP, KC4NVU, KD4EZW, KM4BTW, KN4PFZ, KO4YOL, N2HAY, N4JTK, WE4MJ, KW4MO, K4BJS, KB4HAH, W4CJB, W4KEF



## Why Ham Radio?

By: Bryan Phillips, KQ4FMY

If some are like me, the question that is often asked when someone finds out a person is a licensed amateur radio operator and enthusiast is a single worded question, "why"? This month I turned 37 years old and have been posed this question. I remember one night in particular someone at church asking me this. They asked, in the age of cell phones, internet, and computers, what is the benefit of being on something like a radio? Do I know the other person always on the other end? What is the point? I tried to answer these questions the best I could, but it did get me to thinking. When we live in a time of vast connectivity, why did I pursue getting licensed to get on the air? When getting ready to write this article, I found myself pondering the question of why I embarked on my amateur radio journey. There are numerous avenues to answer this question, as it is different for everybody. But first my background on getting on the air.

They say the gateway now to amateur radio is GMRS. I remember the night one of the guys in the club called me on my handheld after receiving my GMRS call sign. The idea of my voice going around Madison County, made me reminisce about my fire rescue days being on the radio while we talked back and forth. A few weeks later the conversation turned towards ham radio, and he mentioned that with my background and if I liked GMRS I should get my ham license. I went back and forth on deciding. The idea of studying and testing seemed ominous, however the reward of getting my technician license had benefits. I went to our local ARES meeting and was introduced that evening to my future Elmer, and the following Friday night I attended my first class. I studied during the Christmas break and a month later I received my callsign KQ4FMY. I was officially on the air. Thinking this was it as far as licensing and pursuing privileges was concerned, little did I know I was just beginning my journey on the air. But why is ham radio relevant today? Why ham radio at all?

First off, as an amateur radio operator, I believe at the heart of everybody that has uttered the phrase CQ, is a sense of adventure and wonder. Ham radio provides this with every transmission made. When I first got on the air I was lost in the sea of gadgets, gizmos, and the newest and greatest things. But at the heart of the amateur radio hobby is the sense to create and experience that which is new. When the ham radio hobby was born, there wasn't the internet or a national company that distributed or sold equipment. Much of what people had -was either a design passed on and built or the simple notion of creating what was needed to make the contact and get on the air. I can only imagine what the pioneers of amateur radio experienced when something they built succeeded them and their purpose. I remember building my first antenna, which was nothing more than a simple 10-meter inverted V. It wasn't fancy, or expensive, but my first QSO with someone in Ventura, California ignited a desire inside me to continue developing antennas and skills that would suit my needs. It was then that I felt the sense of adventure and wonder of what ham radio was all about. The thought of what other operators before me had felt crossed my mind, and what it was like to make a contact on something I built, and I wanted to continue to do just that.



Secondly, ham radio provides a fellowship and kindred ship among ham radio operators. Ham radio provides a connection, something that is lost in today's fast paced world. Before I ever punched my tech ticket, my local ARES group took me in as one of their own. They offered encouragement, and advice all along the way. Whenever I have traveled, I have met other hams, been invited to nets on repeaters when visiting family out of town, or even met teachers from my college days who have since retired but gotten their tech ticket and see me as a fellow operator rather than a student. At the heart of ham radio there is a sense of community that is shown that doesn't exist elsewhere. A desire to help those outside the amateur radio community, whether it is to reach out to tell others about the hobby, or to use their skills to help their communities around them. I have experienced this and have come to the conclusion that amateur radio is a family that is always expanding.



Finally, Ham radio provides a journey. As I stated in the first part of my article about my journey, the journey others embark on is different from myself and their fellow operators. When I began my journey, my desire was to get my tech, linger for a while, then continue on. Needless to say, after my first HF contact, I realized I wanted to take the next step. I was licensed as a Technician in January 2023, I passed general in September 2023, and now I am currently studying for my extra. I'm not doing this to only have additional privileges, but to be able to help others embarking on their radio journey as well. Whether it be things I learn along the way, items bought or built, or being able to give tests one day, I have come to the realization that as I progress, so does my enjoyment, interest, and desire to help others along the way, whether new or old. The help that has been shown to me is something I want to reciprocate to others around me. It may not be a lot, but if it helps one more person on their ham journey or brings a new operator on the air, at the end of the day that's what it is all about. And that is continuing the journey like operators before us embarked on. We are operators who have built our foundations on the foundations they laid years ago. And as operators today, we need to continue that legacy for future generations.

I'm sure there are many more views, and opinions others may have as to why they became an amateur radio operator. This past January during my anniversary of being on the air for a full year, it was also the same time as my son's birthday. He had been watching me on the radio whether it was on a net, a QSO across the country, or an evening talk with someone on the local repeater. He asked me one day if he would be able to get on the radio like I do. I told him we would see. When his eighth birthday came around, I got him a GMRS radio to see how he would respond. Upon opening the box his eyes got wide when he saw it was a radio like mine. We went outside and he got on our local GMRS repeater to use my callsign to see who was on the air. I won't forget the look on his face when one of our local GMRS repeater users chimed in and took the time to talk to him. To see the excitement and interest he had that night reminded me of what ham radio is all about. It was an encouragement that my son found a new interest, but more importantly that ham radio will still continue to captivate future generations like it has for myself and many others. -73's Bryan, KQ4FMY.



### Suwannee County ARES News

Gordon "Gordie" Beattie, W2TTT

This month had Suwannee County making all of its nets with one exception. We also had some great improvements in our EOC and home stations.

Our regular Suwannee County ARES Net on Sunday night at 8:30 pm ET on 145.27 MHz (-600 kHz, 123.0 Hz) sessions happened each week with either Gordon W2TTT or Joe KI4TRR as net control. Many thanks go to Joe for stepping in especially when Gordon is out of town on business! Weekly checkins come from Suwannee, Madison, Columbia and Leon Counties and additional checkins have come from many other counties in Florida and Georgia.

Our EC Mike KM4BTW, assisted by Harry KN4SVY, Mark KN4FRM and Gordon W2TTT have kept us solid on the 9:00 am ET Wednesday morning ARES net attendance from the EOC station KK4RQY as well as the 1:00 pm SARNET check-in net. We did miss the 4/24 check-in on SARNET due to a building access control issue that is being addressed. We live and learn and that's why we drill.



The EOC station, KK4RQY has a low (NVIS) 40m dipole that was installed in the days before Hurricane Ian to complement the 80m dipole on the tower that holds our VHF-UHF antennas.

Mike KM4BTW has fabricated a beautiful three band (80/60/40m) fan dipole to replace the 80m dipole. However, some of the wires have "wrapped" on one side of the dipole and we'll need a lift to fix it. That will happen soon.



Mike KM4BTW, Randy KG7QNK and Mark KN4FRM during the installation of the new fan dipole. (Not shown is Gordon W2TTT).

During activations, we can add a second HF radio and laptop for simultaneous operations on either voice or Winlink. Often a second IC-7300 is borrowed from a member's station and provides this capability. This streamlines operations and reduces operator confusion. We can also bring in a second radio for local 2m or 70cm operation to complement the TH-D710. This has been done for FM voice, but could be used for Winlink with VARA FM, or AX.25 or VARA packet. Right now we are using W2TTT's VARA license, but we will get one for KK4RQY shortly.

Each year, KK4RQY is getting better prepared for the Hurricane season. Ian, Idalia and lesser storms have tuned us up and even made members more prepared at home! Randy KG7QNK has built a nice, cozy ham shack on the back of his shop and has acquired some nice equipment to put on the air once the shack is finished and antennas installed



Gordon W2TTT finally got around to begin the process of rerouting antenna cables through his grounded lightning arrestor box outside the ham shack. Cutting those big holes through stainless steel was TOUGH! Gaskets were made from clear 1/4 inch tubing that was cut to length and slit before placement on the hole edges. Cables come from the antennas on the side shown, pass through one of the lightning arrestors and then go out the other side and enter the ham shack.



Here is a top view. Additional lightning arrestors are going to be installed for 75 Ohm antennas, Ethernet and control cables. The hinged lid closes like a coffin.

So times are good here in Suwannee County with a small increase in prepared membership and station robustness and functionality. Further, our relationship with Madison County ARES is mutually beneficial and creates energy to do interesting things. If you would like to join the Suwannee County ARES Team, please reach out to our Emergency Coordinator Mike Meador KM4BTW at [mmeador@hotmail.com](mailto:mmeador@hotmail.com) or Net Control Gordon Beattie W2TTT at [w2ttt@att.net](mailto:w2ttt@att.net).



## GMRS/FRS and ARES Emergency Communications

Reid Tillery, K9RFT, WRZM878

Many thanks to Jim Carr for doing his magic with the GMRS repeater in Windsor. Now, residents of Windsor using a GMRS radio will be able to talk all around that rural Alachua County community with only an HT. Plus, there are three hams in the Windsor area, Sam KK4RTA, Jim KO4ZSC, Alvin KM4DLF. The repeater will help build the Windsor Radio Safety Net of GMRS users.

In other news, the Melrose Radio Safety Net is still small but growing. We now have several GMRS stations in the area that have participated in the Net, including Amy WSAY396, Bill WRZX738, Michael WRZQ551, Cliff WRCK820, Josh WSCI821, and Ron WSCF332. One more station just applied for a license this weekend. Of course, the plan is that we one day have dozens of licensed Net participants. The plan is to recruit and/or train more people to be hams, who are the "long-distance carriers" able to take messages out of the area to the EOC and worldwide via Winlink.

Three fire stations in eastern Alachua County now have ham 2-meter antennas: Station 24(42) in Melrose, Station 61 in Windsor, and Station 63 in Cross Creek. Butch AC4BW is the main operator in Cross Creek. Jim KO4ZSC is the main operator in Windsor. And Reid K9RFT is the main operator in Melrose. Special thanks to Ron KN4ZUJ for filling in as an alternate, and for Cliff KN4RGR for volunteering to be a station operator.

We still want to establish a viable GMRS net for Cross Creek. We do have at least two GMRS licensees in the area--Kathy WSBS352 and Butch WSAQ977.

In addition, it would be great to include Waldo in the east county radio network. GARS has licensed and experienced operators and a great station right in town, which could serve as a falcon station for both ham and GMRS.

Anyone wishing to join in on this exciting and rewarding effort to build radio networks in eastern Alachua County would be totally welcomed aboard. I invite you to come to the Melrose Library on May 9 at 3 pm to see what's going with regard to GMRS. See the attached flyer.

**[GMRS Radio for Everyday and Emergence Communications](#)**  
**[A Presentation Coming to the Melrose Library](#)**  
**[Thursday, May 9 at 3pm.](#)**





## A Creative Anderson PowerPole Distribution Solution

Gordon "Gordie" Beattie, W2TTT

### Introduction

In this article we will discuss a solderless method for creating power distribution for Amateur Radio that will be easy to build and cost-effective while providing options to meet your specific requirements for fuse protection. By using Anderson PowerPole connectors, some wire, fuse holders and WAGO "lever-type" connectors, you can have power distribution solved for many of your projects.

The key element in this article is the WAGO lever connector. These are reusable connectors that allow a stripped wire to be inserted into an open position and clamped by the closure of a lever. Each wire has their own position and lever clamp. For some reason, electrical supplies don't seem to carry the WAGO lever connectors and instead carry wire nuts or "push-in" connectors.



The WAGO lever connectors come in various wire sizes and in multiple configurations. These are the ones I have on hand for home and ham projects.

### Background

With EMCMM having a major role in many of our Amateur Radio activity profiles, the need to quickly and efficiently interconnect radios, computers and accessories to 12-14.8 VDC power has motivated many of us to integrate the 15/30/45 Ampere-sized Anderson PowerPole connectors into our Amateur Radio stations, mobiles and "Go Kits". Years ago, many ARES groups settled on the use of Anderson PowerPole connectors for rapid interoperability among operators swapping equipment. They provide a very convenient and almost "idiot proof" way to connect equipment to power.

### Distribution Options

Now there are great distribution solutions from West Mountain Radio that provide DC power "strips" with multiple fused ports that light up an LED on the position of the power strip if the ATC/ATO fuse is blown. Some models integrate low or high voltage audible alarms, LED voltage status indicators and 5VDC USB power ports. These are excellent features, but they can become costly or bulky. Through the years I have used them dozens of times at home, in vehicles and in deployed packages to enable orderly wiring and power distribution safety.

There are also lots of alternative products from other vendors, but with a few domestic exceptions, I have not been impressed with the consistency of their product quality. What seems to be the common failure point is that the electrical contacts are not up to the standards of REAL Anderson PowerPole connectors. As a reminder, there are lots of inexpensive "PowerPole" connectors available online that aren't REAL Anderson PowerPole connectors. DON'T BUY THEM! You will have problems - just give it time. When shopping for these connectors, look for the phrase, "Anderson PowerPole" and not just "PowerPole". Buying from Quicksilver Radio, Powerwerx, West Mountain Radio or any of the reputable Amateur Radio equipment vendors (Ham Radio Outlet, DX Engineering, Main Trading Company, et al) is a solid and reliable purchasing strategy.

### Soldering An Alternative

Our Anderson PowerPole power distribution solution does not require a soldering iron. Normally, when one needs to create a power distribution device for our radio-related equipment, it involves bringing together two clusters of heavy wire: one for the positive lead and the other for the negative. Doing that properly, often requires the use of a 100-200W soldering iron or a small torch. Wrapping together a mixture of heavy and small wires, tinning them, getting sufficient solder into the connections and then insulating them can be time-consuming and result in a kludge even if functional and durable. Clearly another approach is needed.

Continued on next page...

## Tools

I have found that I can assemble a 1:4 Anderson PowerPole distribution pigtail in about fifteen minutes with three tools: wire strippers, side cutters and an Anderson PowerPole crimper. With a little practice with the side cutters, you can go without the wire strippers.



Here are some useful links to the tools needed to assemble these distribution pigtails.

Klein Tools 11061 Self-Adjusting Wire Stripper / Cutter, Heavy Duty, for 10-20 AWG Solid, 12-22 AWG Stranded, and Romex Wire 12/2 and 14/2 <https://a.co/d/iIOOZJH>

YEGEOOE Flush Wire Cutters, 10PACK Flush Cut Pliers, Side Cutters, Diagonal Side Cutting pliers, Wire Snips, Nippers, Small Wire Cutters for jewelry making crafts <https://a.co/d/8MmnW79>

Powerwerx TR1crimp, the best Powerpole crimping tool for Anderson Powerpole 15, 30 and 45 amp contacts <https://a.co/d/8nwBjFI>

## Supplies

Once you have your tools, you will need some 12 gauge red/black stranded copper "zip" cord, some 30A Anderson PowerPole connectors, some 12 or 14 gauge ATO/ATC fuse pigtails and some 221-series WAGO Lever Nuts.

Here are some useful links to the components.



GS Power 12 Gauge Wire (12 AWG) - 100 Foot, Pure Copper, Stranded Electrical Wiring for Speaker, Automotive, Trailer, Stereo and Home Theater Applications - Red/Black <https://a.co/d/3vloq7J>

Anderson Powerpole Connectors 50 Pair <https://a.co/d/7gsH5N6>

InstallGear ATC Fuse Holder with 30A Fuse, 10 Gauge OFC Power Wire (12 Pack) | for Car, Truck, Automotive, Marine, Industrial, and RV <https://a.co/d/6EikX3n>

Nilight Inline Holder 14AWG Wiring Harness ATC/ATO 30AMP Blade Automotive Fuse Holder-10 Pack, 2 Years Warranty <https://a.co/d/atCohI7>

WAGO 221 Series 90pc Lever Nuts | Includes (25x 221-2401), (25x 221-412), (25x 221-413), (15x 221-415) | Compact Splicing Wire Connectors Assortment Pack | 221 Series Assortment with Case <https://a.co/d/13GSeAa>



## Basic 1:4 Power Distribution Construction

Step by step instructions are below.

1. Cut five 8 inch lengths of red/black 12 gauge zip cord
2. Split each end
3. Strip 3/4 inches of insulation from the wires of one end and 3/8 inches from the wires at the other end.
4. Crimp 30A Anderson PowerPole tips to the 3/8 inch ends.
5. Slide a red and black Anderson PowerPole shell together with the red on right and pointing upwards when viewed from the "butt" end.
6. Insert the red and black wires into the appropriate shell until it clicks.
7. Take one five position WAGO 221-series lever connector and insert each of the 3/4 inch stripped ends of the red wires into positions and lock them. Then repeat for the black wires.
8. Try to mirror the connectors in order for it to be neat and orderly. Also make sure that all wire strands are firmly inside the WAGO 221 connectors. You can twist them if needed.

### Wiring Options for Safety

It is important to recognize that fuses are in power distribution systems to address the simple need to keep your devices and wiring from becoming fire starters if they become shorted. If your equipment leads all have the required fusing, then you can build your distribution device exactly as described above. However, if you have different cable lengths or current needs for each position, or if the equipment power cable lacks fuse protection, you should consider using the right fuse holder and fuses.

### Conclusion

We have two 30 Amp 13.8 VDC power supplies in the Suwannee County EOC and when additional equipment is brought in during storms, these economical Anderson PowerPole distribution devices will now be in place to support such events. Further, I have a compact network "Go Box" that needed power distribution in a small space with no room for any commercial distribution device and so this solution is going to be implemented there as well.

If you have any questions, please feel free to drop me a note.



## GO-Kits Redone

Ed Underfinger , AA0EU

As technology advances, or we see what others have done, we often find the urge to upgrade, rearrange, or just do things differently. This is the case regarding my go kits. I had a "field day in a box" kit built around an FT-897D and two 10A Dakota Lithium LiFePO4 batteries, packaged in two Dewalt TStak cases:and a QRP kit built around an LNR Precision 4 band Mountain Topper CW-only radio:



The FT-897 set up was bulkier than I wanted, and I wasn't getting the use out of the Mountain Topper, so I've been making some changes. I didn't like the bulk (or the expense) of a Gator/Hardigg box-style setup, and one evening I came across a go kit built in a backpack. This appealed to me, so I started assembling parts. I had acquired an FT-891 so I decided to build around it, and those same Dakota Lithium batteries. A QYT tri-band fills the VHF/UHF duties, BuddiPole and Slim Jim for antennas, and Conдор supplied a medium pack and the insert.



The BuddiPole kit fits in the central section and the clips on the front of the pack secure a Comet analyzer



For the QRP rig I simply replaced the Mountain Topper with an 8-band SDR transceiver:



**Field! Day Ready**

## Okaloosa County Hams and its members span the country!

DJ Stewart, KI4ZER , Assistant Section Manager, NFL, ARRL, President, W4AAZ, W4ZBB

Last month we wrote about our snowbirds! What didn't make the article was that they love to stay in touch when they return to the north for the summer months! But how?!

On the radio of course!

Hello to everyone at the PARC, my radio home away from home, hi hi. I would like to invite everyone who can to participate in our special event station happening 4/27/2024. The Green Bay Mike and Key Club is celebrating the founding of St. Norbert College in De Pere, WI 125 years ago. It is common knowledge around here that the college was an early experimenter with radio and brought the first radio broadcast station to the Green Bay area. Although the station is no longer owned by the Norbertine Fathers who still run the college, WTAQ is still on the air and it's transmitting plant is nestled inside the property of the campus on an outlying edge.

It would sure be great to hear some of those 4 calls on that Saturday, so please help us make the day a memorable event. Details about when and where to find us on the dial are below.

**04/27/2024 | The 125th Anniversary of the founding of St. Norbert College in De Pere, WI**  
**Apr 27, 1400Z-1830Z, K9N**, De Pere, WI. Green Bay Mike & Key Club, inc. 3.915 7.270  
14.285. Certificate. E-certificate only;, email, [contact@k9eam.org](mailto:contact@k9eam.org). [www.k9eam.org](http://www.k9eam.org)

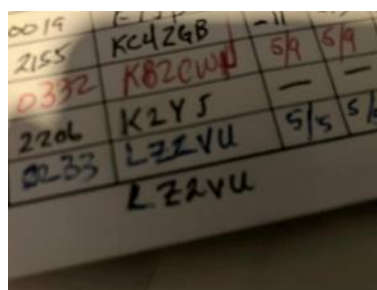
The ARRL listing can be found [here](#).

Michael W Pickett W9MWP (proud member of PARC)



## Worldwide Dx and the enjoyment of communications continue!

Not bad what you can do with a wire and a radio!... This was from a 40 meter dipole with existing wire from an old antenna, inverted v at 24 ft with ends about 10 ft... SWR is 1.17 in the middle of the band and I got a guy in Bulgaria on the first attempt.



## What really goes on Sundays at the Playground Amateur Radio Club Pile-Up?!

Here is a snippet of one of the days! The PARC Teram and guests met up once again for their weekly Pile-Up! Contacts were made, new members signed up, and of course, the excitement of multiple projects! The continuation of working on Wires-X, repairing members coaxial runs, reviewing rotators and controllers with new hams, looking up the callsigns of recent contacts and seeing their shacks (virtually of course). This also includes antenna maintenance on the tower and troubleshooting a poorly operating mobile station to identify a bad magnet mount. Believe it or not, there's more! Our members help each other out and we went over and performed some minor vehicle repairs as well! We are more than just an Amateur Radio Club, we are participants that matter in each other's lives.



As we continue to expand our horizons into our ever-evolving hobby we encourage lifelong learning and intellectual growth. By pursuing new interests and challenging ourselves, we open avenues for continual learning and development. We build meaningful connections and expand our social circles. Joining clubs, classes or online communities related to our hobbies allows us to meet new people who share our passions. This can lead to the formation of new friendships, collaborations, and a broader understanding of different perspectives.

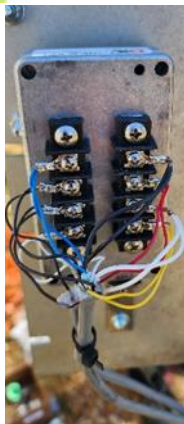
Find your passion, find your area of expertise, and share it with others. You never know who you inspire, or what you will learn!

The North Okaloosa Amateur Radio Club Supports!

Continued on next page...



NOARC also took care of some of their own business! They met after the ECAC 5k to tend to some more project work for the club station! This time to enhance the station grounding and bonding. While there, they also identified some previously unknown conditions that will require more work to rectify and make their station an operating powerhouse!



### **The North Okaloosa Amateur Radio Club Supports!**

NOARC is known for its love of supporting the community and in no short order they were asked to perform a vital communication role for the Emerald Coast Autism Center 5K run in Niceville at the Northwest Florida State College Campus! This event was supported with a portable repeater and a coordinated effort by all who volunteered and lauded by the ECAC for its success and safe operation while multiple events were simultaneously occurring on the NWFSC campus!

But wait, there's more! NOARC also was able to assist the Live Oak Baptist Church USDA food drive! The Hams met and operated on simplex to handle the pedestrian and vehicle traffic for the LOBC food pantry! Assisting not only families in need, but also making sure that the area was safe for travel and organized in a close space environment! This commodity supplemental food program is open to all in Okaloosa County and supports all age ranges! In the center is Ed, a volunteer from LOBC.

### **Super APRS Action!**

APRS (Amateur Packet Reporting System) is BOOM'ing! We all mostly know that! But did you know that it also participates with SKYWARN and the local Emerald Coast Emergency Planning? Weather anomalies can be done in multiple ways. Automated (connected to a weather station) or manually (reporting by hand)! This can be accomplished in a multitude of ways but one that is frequently used by Hams in Okaloosa County is the Citizen Weather Observer Program (CWOP). While these systems have been in place for long periods of time, more of the newer Hams are being exposed to the capability thanks to operators who have the gear and are sharing their experiences! With the low costs of reliable APRS radios, the expansion of APRS reporting (for positioning, weather, events, and networks sharing real-time tactical communications. Messages are exchanged and items of interest are broadcast to inform of signaling and direction finding. There is so much more that APRS is and can be. The point here being that the amount in the immediate area is increasing as more expand their Ham horizons! Check out the area (and the country) on APRS.fi to see the traffic being shared. You will be amazed at the announcements that are out there! Curious to learn more and see it for more than what the surface level has to offer? Read the user guide and interact with your local hams that you see on the map. We guarantee they will be willing to share and discuss the advantages of the APRS system. There is also a discussion group on APRS.fi for those that want to interact in cyberspace: <https://groups.google.com/g/aprsfi>

aprs.fi #iz=10&call=&others=1&timerange=3600&tail=3600

30°5'43" N 87°12'16" W, EM80JC

aprs.fi · Login

OnlineDirectionsExplorer  
Earth View & Satellite Maps **OPEN >**

Track call sign: Clear  
[Search] ?

Address, city or Locator: Clear  
[Search] ?

Show last: 1 hour Show all

Track tail length: 1 hour

Wx: 64°F 44% 1022 mbar 4.2 MPH N

**Other views:**

- Station info
- Raw packets
- Status packets - Beacon packets
- APRS/CWOP weather - Telemetry
- Messages - Bulletin board
- Prefix browsing
- Google Earth KML ?
- Data export tool
- Preferences - My account

**Information:**

Stations currently moving · User guide · FAQ · Blog · Discussion group · Linking to aprs.fi · AIS sites · Service status · Database statistics · Advertising on aprs.fi · Technical details · API · Change log · Planned changes · Credits and thanks · Terms Of Service · iPhone/iPad APRS

Idle: points updated 3, deleted 0

**CONTINUE >**

Know More

All the above are just a sliver of the occurrences that go on throughout the month in Okaloosa County! The Hams here say, “we are getting into the busy period”. From what this writer can see and tell you, there is so much more, and they are always “productive”! Here is when you can participate with the Clubs in Okaloosa County and find out how to join in on the fun and exhilarating times that they love to share with everyone who has an interest in Amateur Radio!

### [North Okaloosa Amateur Radio Club](#)

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays, 7pm CST, 4565 Live Oak Church Rd, Crestview, Florida!

### [Playground Amateur Radio Club](#)

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays, 730pm CST and every Sunday at 3pm, 17 A First Street SE, Fort Walton Beach, Florida!

### [Okaloosa County ARES](#)

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday, 2pm CST, 90 E college Blvd, Niceville, Florida!



# North Florida Amateur Radio Club

FUNtastic 2024 FL QSO Party, Gordon Gibby KX4Z  
<https://www.nf4rc.club/funtastic-2024-fl-qso-party/>



What FUN! What a SUCCESS!! More photos to come from Olivia, our new PHOTOGRAPHER, but here are some. We had a GREAT time, renewed and made friendships, practiced operating, gained new skills and knowledge.

The biggest learning point for ME was just how much FUN our crew had just sitting around and TALKING. I had not planned well for this and that can be improved, but our folks brought chairs and just visited with each other while teams fought their way onto bands and scored precious contacts! Despite two rain-showers, the weather was PERFECT with overcast/sunny alternating, and great temperatures and very few BUGS.



Two of our TRUE COMPETITORS at work! 15 meters was not that great, with fewer folks than we had hoped on the band, but they harvested mightily!



FT8 is more Dean's speed, but it isn't part of the FL QSO Party so he soldiered forth on sideband on our 2nd station.



A shot of the QUINTPLEXOR and homemade cans that allowed us to operate TWO stations simultaneously with (most of the time) little difficulty. Due to Nancy getting sick, and time limitations, we didn't have our "best" filters available....and somehow the 40-meter filter busted (we'll fix it! — bad solder, blown cap? we'll find it). 20 and 15 were doing acceptably. We will be building more of the lower-loss VA6AM filters.



Manish, Leland, Susan getting into the action. This was after we pulled out the BED to make room for the extra operating position. Jury-rigged, but it







EVERYBODY got into the action! 15 meters kinda DIED by the late afternoon (and our late start due to medical complications) but everyone got a chance to HONE THEIR STYLE. And we had CONTACTS!! Even DX!!! By some of our NEWBIES!!! Way to go, gang!! Word from Columbia County was that it was only later in the afternoon that they started racking up QSO's — and then they ZOOMED! So maybe it takes more time than we had, or better propagation? But we did the best we could for the time and people we could! –

We had incredible success in setting up and tearing down. Fanning Springs State Park didn't bat an eyelash at our trailers and our entourage! The trailer spots back of Hardees in Dixie County were EMPTY. Over and over, our crew did SETUP and TEARDOWN in literally 14-20 minutes! It was unbelievable how many "ants" were flying around tightening this, unfurling that, connecting the other and turning on stations! We could drive to a spot, be operating inside 15 minutes, give a crew a good chance, and be ready to drive again after a 15 minute teardown! Wow!! We have NEVER had these skills before. We are truly a portable team, now!

**FULL Incident Action Plan for Saturday FL QSO**



**Alachua County Simplex Test—5/4/2024 19:00**

Mike Martell, KK4KRZ

On Saturday May the 4<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM the Alachua County Simplex test S2-24 will be conducted on 146.550 Mhz. This test will be controlled by Karyn Shander , KQ4JBR, using the GARS 146.820 repeater. Contact one of the leaders for the Alachua County Simplex Test Data Form with a list of transmitting stations and the order they will be transmitting.

We ask that you use this form during the test to record if you heard or not heard a calling station. When Simplex test S2-24 is finished request you send a copy of the completed form to [authorlorilynroberts@gmail.com](mailto:authorlorilynroberts@gmail.com) or [mikeham73@yahoo.com](mailto:mikeham73@yahoo.com).

The test controller will call on each station in order to begin transmitting for 30 seconds on 146.550 simplex. When the transmitting station is complete they will inform the test controller on the 146.820 repeater and the controller will call the next station to begin transmitting.

You will need to monitor the 146.820 repeater and 146.550 simplex. Most radios are dual band and can be switched or you can use two radios. The reason for using both the repeater and simplex is to be able to follow the progress of the test even though you may not hear many simplex transmissions.

We are asking for as many amateurs as possible to participate in this test. The goal is to establish a simplex system in Alachua county and surrounding areas by determining which amateurs can communicate using simplex. If you have any questions or comments please contact

Lorilyn Roberts at [authorlorilynroberts@gmail.com](mailto:authorlorilynroberts@gmail.com) ,  
Mike Martell at [mikeham73@yahoo.com](mailto:mikeham73@yahoo.com), or  
Karyn Shander at [karynshander@gmail.com](mailto:karynshander@gmail.com).



# Loften High School FL QSO Results

Bob Lightner, W4GJ

W.T. Loften students had a great Florida QSO Party. This is the K4WTL score for CW:

Total Contacts	540
Total QSO Points	1,080
Total Multipliers	63
Total Score	68,040

Eliza made all of them on CW! We are still tabulating our Phone QSOs. We hope to get the First Place Plaque for "Top Florida School" again!"



One of our FQP Plaques:



John at his FL QSO Station



She's holding a hand key presented to her by Guma Shinji, A Japanese HAM. This "CW Nut" can handle 35 wpm or converse with slower speed Hams at their speed.



## USS ORLECK HAM STATION PLANS FOR YEAR TWO

By Billy Williams, N4UF

The Amateur Radio station on board the USS Orleck is being readied for a new season of operation from the ship's communications area. The museum ship is now permanently anchored near Jaguar stadium at the former shipyard site. The ship is open to visitors daily except Monday & Tuesday.

Plans include participation in the 2024 Museum Ships Weekend on June 1-2 when dozens of similar operations will be on the air. Additional activations based on national and local commemorations are also possible.

Additional help with restoration and maintenance is always appreciated. Pending projects include cable installation, equipment arrangement and general upkeep. See <https://jaxnavalmuseum.org/volunteer/>

A recent JaxToday article about USS Orleck is posted via <https://jaxtoday.org/2024/03/26/uss-orleck-celebrates-2nd-anniversary-with-historic-refit/>

## NOFARS MEETS THURSDAY, MAY 9TH

The next NOFARS meeting is Thursday, May 9th at Hogan Baptist Church, 8045 Hogan Rd. The meeting starts at 7:00pm and all are welcome to attend.

The program will include recent upgrades for the W4IZ 146.7/444.4 MHz repeater system at the city communications site atop the Wells Fargo building downtown. Construction is nearing completion after installation of new transmission lines.

At the April 13th meeting, Mike Robinson, KG2MM spoke about the Parks On The Air program and a half dozen PO-TA participants described their operations. Thanks to Mike for a very interesting program.



# MERT

Marion County Emergency Radio Team



Marion County Sheriff's Office  
Division of Emergency Management

## COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE May 2024

**MERT's primary role is to support all open Evacuation Shelters throughout Marion County during declared Emergency events. We also support EOC and emergency personnel along with Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) with voice, image and data communications resources.**

***"Call MERT When all else fails!"***

### Much to be thankful for

**MERT Monthly Meeting**  
**The next meeting is on May 18th @ 10:00 am.**  
**All Amateur Radio operators are Welcomed!**



**Harlan Cook (KN4VRM)**  
**MERT Coordinator**

"The beautiful spring came; and when nature resumes her loveliness, the human soul is apt to revive also." — Harriet Ann Jacobs

As we know, volunteers are essential to the everyday success of many organizations from schools and churches to helping at hospitals and yes, local governmental support groups, like MERT. Volunteerism offers every individual, regardless of age, the opportunity to indulge their interests and passions while giving back to their communities. The act also builds character too.

My great-grandmother Mariam was the first to introduce me to the importance of volunteering when we would help her church prepare meals for the elderly every Sunday morning and then personally deliver them. She was always strong and unwavering in her beliefs about helping others without hesitation.

MERT's success, like all volunteer organizations, reflects upon the actions and character of each members individual contributions. Over the last month, many members have made significant contributions to continue MERT's efforts training and preparing for our mission while Bill and I have been unavailable.

We are indebted to all members support and participation but especially recognize Pat Davis, Administration and New Member Manager for leading and organizing events and activities. We thank you for your passion, commitment and leadership shown to continue MERT's success!

Best regards to all!



We sincerely thank Gray Moffett (KC3DWW) for filling this position over the last 2 years. Gray's support included conducting our "MERT Annual Meeting Report" and the report of MERT Highlights of 2022 and 2023.



Gray Moffett  
KC3DWW

**MERT needs YOU!**

What does the Meeting Documentation Manager do? This person completes an annual report of the MERT activity highlights and conducts the Annual Meeting. If you can help for 5 hours **per year**, please let the MERT Coordinator or Assistant Coordinator know you can help!

***Thank You Gray for your great support over the last two years!***

### ¿Nos puedes ayudar?

Can you help translate our updated MERT Information Brochure into a Spanish language format? If so, contact Harlan or Bill.

### MERT Welcomes New Member

Please join me in welcoming Ryan Salom, N8GLX to MERT. Ryan has a General license, lives in SW Marion County and is a pilot for a private aviation company.

Thanks for saying Hi! and introducing yourself when you meet him.

***Welcome to MERT Ryan!***

***"When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better too."***

- Paulo Coelho

### MERT Supports CERT Exercise at the EOC – March 9th

MERT members supported the major CERT Exercise on March 9<sup>th</sup> by being assigned to each CERT team as "radio operators/communicators". Here's a summary of the days activities provided by Pat Davis (KQ4BRW) Administration and New Member Manager.

**"CERT/MERT Exercise 3/9/24 --** These are my thoughts and general info for MERT leaders who were unable to attend.

MERT members who had signed up arrived on time in the radio room beautifully. A couple MERTians who hadn't signed up... Sally, Rene, and Bruce... also appeared, thank goodness. 3 small radios were checked out and all 4 roving MERTians got a clipboard, 309 form, directions, and 213 form. Bruce stepped in for Sharon when she stayed in the radio room with me to be a scribe. The 4 CERT teams were supported by Dee, Bruce, Clint, and Gray. Hayden stayed in the radio room and gave advice on how to handle the traffic that came in, and helped find MERTians who had trouble with radios and checking in. It was pretty amazing how people would step in and fix problems that arose without hesitation.

The rovers had to check in whenever their team moved, and we got several messages passed about the triage victims and the hazmat accident. Sharon wrote those 213 messages and the replies - 14 of them. Sally filled out the 214 that I hadn't gotten to, and helped check the radios back in and put them away. Gray did a fantastic job passing messages, using the proper etiquette and verbiage so others could hear him do it correctly. Bruce also had good etiquette, but unfortunately passed away, along with his entire team, at the hazmat exercise. Sharon and I stopped Hayden from doing a silent key ceremony on the radio. I was kept very busy answering the radio, and couldn't have done this exercise without help in the radio room.

Thoughts:

Bruce reported static on his radio at times. Hayden said it might be because the frequency choice 146.400 was close to being a Winlink frequency. Bruce was calm and good natured throughout and a good example for us. Clint had trouble hearing his radio and I had trouble hearing him. Hayden had to do Clint's check ins so Clint could hear, because we all know how loud Hayden can get. We need to double-check the radio that was checked out to Clint.

Continued on next page...

Everything was pretty calm and easy until each team got to the hazmat area, and then a member would send a couple 213s, and talk way too fast. We (I) need training on how to intercept messages that are life or death. Make them slow down so you can write, or take the message mentally so you can send help immediately. Also, need to know how to send help -- call 911 (or as Hayden pointed out 9911 if in the EOC) or run down and hand it off to a Fire Rescue member or whomever.

Afterwards, Henry and Preston did a hotwash with everyone in the pit. Everyone got a badge for their shirts that was a dark little US flag. They bragged up the radio teams, made us stand up and made CERT hams stand up. Talked about their importance and how more training needed with hams and CERT combined. Preston talked about linking all the counties together with radio, and beefing up the repeaters, towers, etc. Preston called all MERT hams to the radio room before leaving and said that he wanted to use the tower from North Marion school that wasn't being used and put it at Belleview ER. Also said he, Sheriff, and Chief were thinking about radio of some kind for deputy communications. He was very complimentary about MERT and ARES performance and saw the need for maybe using MERT members to hold trainings for his deputies because MERT has their act together with training.

Preston also stated that HEC needed people to help them out since they are down 2 members. MERT members could maybe help out in a hospital for emergencies if they felt uncomfortable about going to a shelter. He also said this will be the last year for a CERT training like this one and wants to mix it up more and maybe use the fire college.

Pat Davis (KQ4BRW)"

*Pat, thank you for providing this excellent update on this years Exercise.*



*All Roads Lead to The 2024  
Silver Springs Radio Club's  
ANNUAL TAILGATE*  
**319 SE26th Terrace  
Ocala, FL 34471  
(ELS9)**



*Stop on by, Buy, Sell, Trade, Rag Chew  
and just have a great time!  
More information at the new [k4qso.us](http://k4qso.us)*

*Our hamfest is on December 7th.  
Watch the website for more information!*

**June 1st 8:00 - 1:00**  
**\$5.00 stall donation**  
**Basic ham food -  
Coffee and Doughnuts**

*Talk in on 146.610  
PL 123 (-)*





**Pat Davis (KQ4BRW)  
Administration & New  
Member Manager.**

**MERT Training Exercise – March 27<sup>th</sup>**

Wow! What fun. Pat Davis (KQ4BRW) shared the following activity summary for the March 27<sup>th</sup> Check In meeting.

1. Two new participants: Ryan is a full member now, and Duke (sent by Sharon) put in his application today.
2. We talked about last week's Price's Scrub exercise and this coming week's exercise there. I gave out the ICS 205A and the Incident Radio Communications Plan so all would be ready for next week's exercise whether they are at home base stations or at Price's Scrub.
3. Bill Sobel showed how to convert a Baofeng or any VHF radio to being GMRS, and explained how it is illegal to transmit GMRS on a VHF radio. I gave a handout of the GMRS frequencies. See

attached.

4. I showed Broward County's Fire Chief's procedures for wind speeds and callouts for our awareness only as communicators. Hayden said in Marion it is 45mph before they start prioritizing calls, and in Alachua it is the same. See attached.
5. Several people went with Bill D and Gray to the warehouse to see the storage there. Brought back SHREKS 1-4.
6. We split into 5 teams of 3-4 each.
7. Each shelter team got blank forms, clipboard, SHREK, Shelter Binder, GMRS radio
  - a. Tasks were to inventory SHREK,
  - b. And familiarize themselves with shelter binder
8. EOC team got their own blank forms and radios
9. At 10:15 EOC (Mike) called for a check in of the shelters on channel one
10. At 10:29 scenarios began (see attached)
  - a. Carl manned the radio taking incoming calls from shelters
  - b. Hayden gave the responses to the shelters with a different radio
8. There were a few bumps but mostly it went smoothly.
  - a. EOC – Hayden, Carl, Mike (paperwork was in disarray and only partially filled in, but lots of it. J)
9. Group 1, FHS – Gary, Dee, Phil, Kraig (turned in beautiful paperwork)
10. Group 2, WPHS – Bruce, Ray, Ryan (Legible writing, missing 309)
11. Group 3, VHS – Bill S, Bill D, Duke (Lovely, almost legible paperwork)
12. Group 4, LMS – Gray, Rene, Sally (Great paperwork, missing inventory)
13. We gathered back to the classroom at 10:57 and 11 people stayed until 11:45 doing
14. Verbal hotwash. The high points are below:
  - a. Gary - Debate over being able to say suspected drug overdose on the air,
  - b. Gray - okay but don't use names, keep anonymous – backed up by Bruce
  - c. Dee – had to wait 3 or 4 times for answers – Hayden said if no response to urgent message within 5 minutes follow up with the EOC
  - d. Carl- operators talking too fast, use blocks of 5 words, no saying “dead” on the air – say “unresponsive”
  - e. Hayden – be clear what is requested new generator or new tank of diesel
  - f. Bruce – don't put different types of supplies/things needed on same 213 because different departments fill those and they go to different people
  - g. Hayden – if you have 4 requests, put on four 213s and tell operator you have 4 requests and he will handle them all at the same time, perhaps on a different frequency
  - h. Bruce—be careful to get the correct time on the 213!
  - i. Bruce – If you think a message is wrong that you are given, verify that is what the person intended to send, and then get a signature.
  - j. Carl – refrain using actual school names – people overhearing could freak
  - k. Hayden – If using tactical call signs, put your own call sign at the end of your message to abide by FCC rules. Hayden-use prioritizing of your messages – Dave Welker had also talked about this

We still need lots more practice. A couple people suggested we do this again but outdoors with the SHREKS like the original plan. I LOVE the way people share their knowledge in this bunch and are so ready to teach others. Pat Davis

***Thank you, Pat, for the excellent plan, leadership & event summary of this training event!***



Phil Lewis, Dee Seagraves & Gary Neron



Ryan Salom, Ray Woody & Bruce Twiss



Rene Perron, Sally Gugino & Gray Moffett



Bill Sobel, Bill Davis & Guest Duke Deshommies



Carl Berry



Mike Condon, Hayden Kaufman & MERT's new repeaters

### Sheriff's Volunteer Appreciation Dinner



(Left) - Welcome to the 2024 Sheriff's Office Volunteer Appreciation Dinner!

(Right) – Director Preston Bowlin welcoming Volunteers to the Appreciation Dinner.

(Below) MERT members and Guests at the dinner.



Your weekly volunteer hours can include all amateur radio on-air time, setup and testing time, repairs, reading the MERT newsletter and other ham radio materials, meeting and field exercise time along with your time getting to and back home from all MERT activities. It also includes preparing for your first license and an upgraded FCC license.

Continued on next page...



## Get your Training Skill Book

MERT's new resource helps members gain the knowledge and skills needed to complete critical tasks when activated... and at their own pace! Our original supply of 24 binders has now been restocked so see Pat Davis, Harlan Cook or Bill Gillespie for your copy.



## SPECIAL EVENT REMINDER – MERT 20 Exercise

Saturday, April 27th – 8:00 am to 8:00 PM Have you signed up for MERT20 yet? If not, visit [MERT20.org](http://MERT20.org) or [KG4NXO.com](http://KG4NXO.com) and click the MERT20 Following up on last year's very successful event when members made contact with other amateur radio operators in 7 countries and 24 U.S. states, MERT will do it again April 27th. This exercise event celebrates 20 years of MERT service to the Division of Emergency Management.

MERT20 is a unique Special Event Exercise encouraging every MERT member to learn and participate in activities they may or may not do on a regular basis. The opportunity to spend significant time practicing on-air communications time over multiple bands is not a usual event by amateur radio operators... but it is during MERT20!

Have you talked with other hams in 7 countries and 24 states in one day? Want too? Sign up at: [MERT20.org](http://MERT20.org)!

**MERT20 Special Event Station-2024 KG4NXO**  
 Marion County Emergency Radio Team (MERT)  
 April 27, 2024 (1200 UTC) - (0000 UTC) April 28, 2024

Home About MERT Frequencies Schedule Certificate MERT Member Sign-up

Welcome to the 20th edition of the MERT20 Special Event where emergency communication has evolved! The Marion County Emergency Radio Team (MERT) serves the Marion County (FL) Sheriff's Office. We are an extension of our service providing emergency communication service to the Division of Emergency Management.

MERT is a well equipped radio room established in the Emergency Operations Center and operating capabilities on FM, SSB, CW and digital modes. There are several MERT fire and Q-Code repeaters throughout the county to maintain our capabilities when called into service.

When stations are opened during declared emergency situations, MERT members deploy to these stations as well as off-site emergency locations to support communications back to the Sheriff's Emergency Operations Center.

All members are FCC Licensed Amateur Radio Operators who have completed FEMA/NIMS and Incident Command System (ICS) training. Every member has also been fully vetted background checked through the Sheriff's Department. We stand ready to serve during critical events including hurricanes, tornadoes and other emergency events as requested by the Director of Emergency Management.

Thank you for your time and participation in our 20th MERT20 Special Event operation. Look around the site to register and operate MERT members only, as a courtesy of the FCC, we will not be able to monitor you as a special event station on the air and the service helpdesk/modems we will be using to help you be a part of our celebration.

We look forward to meeting you on the air!  
 Click here for more details about MERT!

Learn more about MERT at..... [KG4NXO.com](http://KG4NXO.com)



## OCWAC Info from Chapter 62, Ocala

Ken Simpson, W8EK, Chapter 62 QCWA President

Standing: Marty, N4GL; Wayne, N4FP;  
 Seated: Dennis, N4KPI; Ned, WB4BKO; Joyce, XYL WB4BKO; Sue, N8AJU; Ken, W8EK; Larry, W9SX; Doug, W3HH;

Ocala, Chapter 62, of the Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA) held its regular meeting on April 25 at the Chine Lee Buffet on East Silver Springs Blvd in Ocala.

After a great meal, the Florida QSO Party was discussed. Wayne, N4FP, plans to operate from 17 counties on Saturday and 17 different counties on Sunday. That is a total of 34, which is half the counties in Florida.

QCWA Chapter 62 meets the fourth Thursday of the even numbered months at China Lee Buffet at 12:30PM. Please join us.

Chapter 62 also has a net every Saturday at 9 AM on 3940 KHz. Please join us on the air also!





# Sumter County ARES

Amateur Radio Emergency Service  
Mark Newby, KX4LEO  
Emergency Coordinator



## Sumter County ARES Fox Hunt

April 10, 2024

On April 2, 2024 local amateur radio operators participated in a "Fox Hunt" organized by Sumter County ARES, in partnership with the Red Oaks Amateur Radio Group and the Hog County Amateur Radio Association.



The event began with training conducted by Sumter County ARES Tehcnology Specialist Earl Hassemmer, W9EJH, on how to properly use different equipment and methods to hone in on radio signals.

A small radio transmitter was then hidden in the Red Oaks RV Park in Bushnell, Florida. This device transmitted a 200mW signal at regular intervals, followed by its CW identification. Hunters, armed with handi talkies or directional Yagi antennas, went out into the park trying to locate the hidden transmitter. Sumter County ARES members Gabriel Leon KG4LEO and Mark Newby KX4LEO located the illusive "Fox".

Fox Hunting, in the world of radio in this case, has been around for years. It is more than just fun. It is a useful skill for any amateur radio operator to understand how to best locate rogue transmitters, the source of malicious transmissions, beacons from downed aircraft, or someone who is in distress using a radio to signal for help.

I want to thank all who participated from the Red Oaks Amateur Radio Group, the Hog County Amateur Radio Association, Sumter County ARES and The Villages Amateur Radio Club. We will be conducting another similar event later this year near Wildwood and The Villages so stay tuned. For more information about Sumter County ARES and how to become a member, check us out at [www.sumterares.org](http://www.sumterares.org).

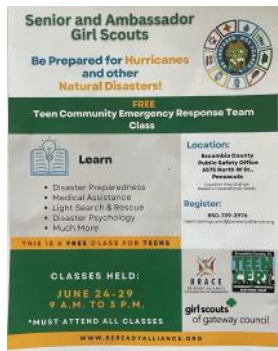
**Mark Newby, KX4LEO**  
Emerency Coordinator  
Sumter County ARES



## The Girl Scout Event:

Gene- Bannon, KB4HAH , W4UC V.P.

Escambia County ARES EC



On Saturday, March 30th, the W4UC and Escambia County ARES with Mike-N4DIA and I (Gene-KB4HAH) were invited to do a demonstration of Emergency Communications for the Girl Scout of America in Conjunction with the local area Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT - BRACE) who were there to demonstrate their emergency actions during an emergency event that may occur in our area. The over theme of this event was "Be Prepared, Not Scared". There were approximately 100 Girls Scouts with their parents who attending this event. Mike & me commenced to set up one of our ARES go-box we use during any emergency event. We strung an Off-Center 40-Mtr Dipole in the back of the Pensacola Christian Academy's Gathering building for our HF operations and one of the portable VHF antennas on a tripod from the Escambia County ARES room at the Emergency Operations Center.

The event started at approximately 09:00 AM with the Girls Scouts breaking up in to 9 separate teams. Each team were to visit one of the demonstration booth that was set up in the large conference room. There were 9 BRACE/ARES booths set up to demonstration their specific function during any emergency event that may occur here in Pensacola area. Each girl scout team had to get the booth to punch a hole in their card of the appropriate image for the booth they attended. As you can see on the event card, the Amateur Radio (ARES) demonstration was an image of a cell phone for Emergency Communication. As we all know, Cell phone will not be available for long after any long duration power outage in our area. Hinz, why our ARES group have completely self-contained Go-boxes with antennas at the Escambia County Public Safety Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for deployment.



We demonstrated what type of communications we can deliver during any emergency event in our area. We even got the visiting team members to get on the air to talk with some of the local Amateur Radio operator in our area on the VHF repeater (146.76 - W4UC). Several of these teams took to chatting on the radio, as do ducks take to swimming in the water. They had no problems grasping the idea of letting the repeater drop before pushing the button to talk again. Several appear to be really interested in ham radio and had a ball talking to the local hams. We also demonstrated our capabilities to send digital messages to other hams throughout the world such as Winlink, FT8 and other digital modes.

At the end of the event, the Girl Scout had a wrap up gathering in the conference room in which prizes were given to the Girl Scout that achieved a significant accomplishment during the past year. At the completion of the awards, the Girl Scout district director asked the group, how many of the scouts talked on the radio at the emergency communication demonstration. The majority of the scout's jumping up and raising their hand. The director told the scout to thank the booths for their demonstrations with a round of applause, in which they did.

At which point, Mike and I demobilized our booth. Overall we had a great time with the Scouts, and we are looking forward to our next event with the Homeschool Festival on Apr 25th in which we will again be demonstrating our Emergency Communications capabilities to them in conjunction with BRACE.



## Introduction to Amateur Radio & Upgrade Five Flags Amateur Radio Assoc (FFARA) & Pensacola State College

On Tuesday Apr 9th, The Five Flags Amateur Radio Assoc (FFARA) in conjunction with Pensacola State College (PSC) Amateur Radio class ("Introduction to Amateur Radio & Upgrade" - [Amateur Radio Introduction & Upgrade - Products - Pensacola State College eStore](#)) held their class session of the "Mini - Field Day" lesson. The class lesson is to demonstrate the working of what it takes to get an amateur radio station operational in the field. It also is to demonstrate what pieces are needed and how they are connected up, to get that station on the air.

The Instructors (Mike-N4DIA, Bill WY8O, and myself (Gene-KB4HAH)) brought in our equipment for this Demonstration. I brought my go-box with VHF and HF rigs with antennas. Bill brought his go box with HF rig and Mike brought his Flex-6400 with a flat screen monitor> we all set up our antennas. Bill strung an end feed long wire from our classroom Fire Escape railing about 30ft up to a College Dorm building fire escape about 80-100 yards away. While Mike strung a 40 Meter Off Center dipole from the same fire escape railing on our class building toward a tree across from the entrance drive to the parking lot of our building.

I on the other hand set up my Ham-sticks on my mag-mount to the hood of my car in the parking lot of our building. After we got our equipment set up, we had the student gather outside to discuss the different antennas and what advantages and dis-advantage of each one. Then went back into the classroom and discussed each of the different stations and explain what it took to get each station operational. We discussed what advantages each station had, and their limitations as well. Bill demonstrated the different types of digital modes such as FT-8, FT4, RTTY, Winlink, PSK-31 and others. Mike demonstrated the advantage of having SDR radio on how with the right accessories can display a complete band and all the signal that are operating on that band. He demonstrated what AM, USB and LSB look like on these displays. I demonstrated the different types of ham-sticks that can be used for a specific band and what advantages they provide as well as the limitations they have. Mike got several of the students on the air (for some was their first QSO) and made several QSO including FK4UY-



Gene Explaining his ham sticks dipoles



First QSO on Ham Radio

Marc in New Caledonia among others. The students were expressed and asked a lot of questions. Finally, the class period came to end and everyone started heading for the door while Mike, Bill and I demobilized our stations. AS always with this class session, the students and instructors seem to have a lot of fun with this topic lesson. Looking forward to doing our VHF/UHF Antenna Construction project, which is our next class session.



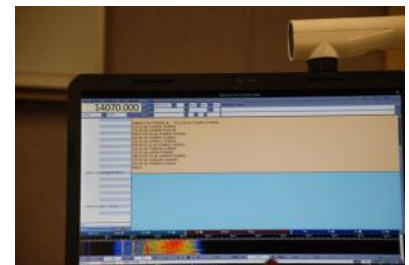
Mike getting his drone ready



Bill explaining his end feed long



Gene Explaining how the D-F1-F2 layers bounce radio waves



Bill demonstrating RTTY

On Thursday, Apr 25th 2024 The Five Flags Amateur Radio Assoc (FFARA) and Pensacola Sate College (PSC) joint sponsored "Introduction to Amateur Radio & Upgrade" completion of the 7th annual Spring term revised course curriculum with 2 new technician class licensed, and one student completed all 3 exams to become an extra class license, and 1 upgraded extra class license ham of the 5 that tested out of the 13 originally students registered for the course.

The course started on Sept 13th 2024, with 20 class sessions (on Tuesdays and Thursdays evenings) of 2.5 hours (6-8:30 PM) lessons in which we covered all 10 topics of the Amateur Radio FFC License exam subjects. The six Instructors (Mike-N4DIA, Dave-K4ND, Bill-WY8O, LArRY-N4TAC, Ron-KW4ZC and Gene-KB4HAH) broke up each topic into class lessons to be taught each night. Each Instructor had their favorite subject and went over that topic, explaining each of the testable information in a way to make it easier to understand and learn that topic for the students.

We had 2 field trips during the course, one of which was the Escambia County Emergency Operation Center (EOC) to explain what Amateur Radio and Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) do during any Emergency Event in our county. They went into the assigned Escambia County ARES room, in which all 4 ARES communication stations are located within.

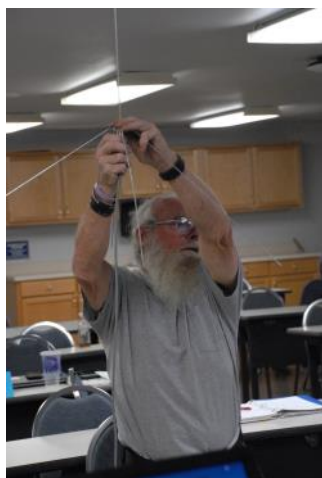
The other field trip is the FFARA monthly meeting in which the students get introduced to the ham community and view what activities, projects and events the ham community conduct in our county. The class also has an Amateur Radio Field Activation demonstration (we refer to as our Min-Field Day) where we bring in our radio go-kits and set up operational radio stations for the student to see what it takes to put an amateur radio station together in the field. We bring our HF, VHF and UHF go-kits and have them demonstrated and get the students on the air (some for the first time).

We also have an antenna project, where we bring in the materials to build their own VHF-UHF antenna, to demonstrate to the students that the lesson we are teaching, can be used to actually build some of your own amateur radio items to create and operate with.

With this class, we have licensed several new hams over the 20 plus years of this class. We are looking forward to our summer break and getting ready for our 8th year of the revised curriculum by making any class revisions and preparations for the fall term.



Student admiring her work



Hooking up Antenna for measurements



Gene's GO-BOX



# NFARC/Alachua County ARES(R) Yagi Antenna Saga

by Gordon Gibby KX4Z



## WELDING

**Stewart Reissener KK4DXF** single-handedly created all the removable additions to add a tilting mount, brace, and saddle resting spot for a tower onto a well-used heavy equipment trailer that makes a great base for a tower. He also created enormous metal lateral stabilizers for the 20-foot trailer. What a huge amount of welding Stewart did!

## TOWER DONATION

The tower, rotator and controller were very generously donated to the group -- but got stored under trees for years as we didn't have a way to use them.....and a tree limb fell and bent a section, preventing extension..... A portion had to be cut out, and repaired (Boone Welding, Gainesville, Thanks, guys!!) [My apologies but I can't find the name of the generous donor....]



Look at the size of the ironwork that Stewart built! Those stabilizers! At this point, we had a very nice tilting, telescoping tower.....and very little to go on top of it.

## YAGI

At which point **Jeff Capehart W4UFL** brought up the TA-33 Jr 3-element, triband (20/15/10) BEAM that was zip-tied in pieces to his backyard fence.



So we all got together for a Lab-NLunch.....and found that **the driven element wasn't resonant ANYWHERE.**

So our education continued with youtube -- learning how to disassemble the traps...which turned out to be full of extraneous material shorting out the coils and ruining the resonance. We went to work with scrub brushes, diet coke (phosphoric acid) and vinegar... and finally got a resonance on the driven element!



NEXT LABNLUNCH

The reflector and director traps were done on our next visit but we could not find any way to test them to see if our cleaning had worked.....

So we created new trap-protective water-excluding "caps" out of vinyl thread protectors (28mm <https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B08HL7B9MZ> ) with nice round holes for the elements burnt through with a soldering iron.

**SELF-INFLICTED DISASTER STRIKES**

Thinking we were doing something smart, we used latex caulk to try and seal the openings of the vinyl caps.

And thankfully we re-checked the driven element resonance before re-assembling everything.....NO RESONANCE ONCE AGAIN! Turns out the caulk is conductive, and we had shorted out every trap once again! Off came the caps, and lots of paper towels cleaning out every bit of the caulk we could get out.....

**Yaesu G-800 ROTATOR**

*It wouldn't even budge* when we put voltage on the wires.....and when I got it off the tower and disassembled it to check on the 98 ball bearings, it was pretty obvious why....

A couple of years horizontal under the trees had let a lot of water and mud into the gear. Yaesu doesn't sell replacement parts.....



Everything had to be disassembled, carefully cleaned, careful sandpaper on the tracks. 3/8" steel ball bearings can be obtained on Amazon, but I was able to clean these up acceptably by tumbling for hours in a rock-tumbler with walnut shells and some gentle abrasive.

Once it was all cleaned up, and we figured out the wiring and reconnected everything, and IT WORKS!! And the CONTROLLER also works!

The THRUST BEARING was a similar story of rust and corrosion. Completely locked solid. The same careful work with fine grit and the rock tumbler and the thrust bearing turns nicely now!!

The weep hole on the G800 rotator is placed assuming the rotator will be VERTICAL, but this deployment trailer will spend 99% of its time with the tower nested down. So we drilled a hole to properly drain the rotator of condensation even when down.

**ALL PUT TOGETHER**

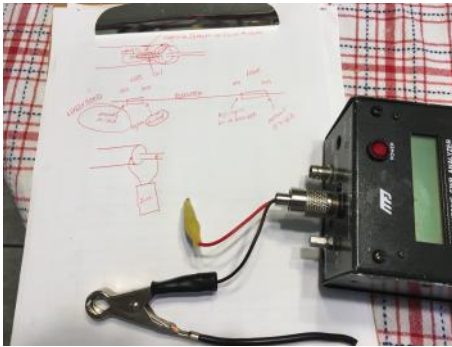
Finally our time for assembling the entire beam, tower, and rotator arrived. That beam looks HUGE when assembled on the newly cut mast on the tower/rotator! Nevertheless, three guys can easily "walk" it up vertical and slowly let it down also.

**DISAPPOINTMENT**

We got the whole thing up....and our measurements showed it doesn't work!! It has LOSS and barely any front-to-back ratio (modest amount of 10 meters).

So BACK DOWN it came and a lot more study went into it. I reviewed every method of measuring trap resonance in parasitic elements that I could find! I tried everything -- the antenna analyzer connected to the trap, a single coil around the trap to hunt for SWR dip, and coupling to the parasitic element with a single coil....feeding the trap RF from a 10K resistor and hunting for resonance with 10X high impedance probes from an oscilloscope....all very difficult and often inconclusive....but I found one obvious problem.

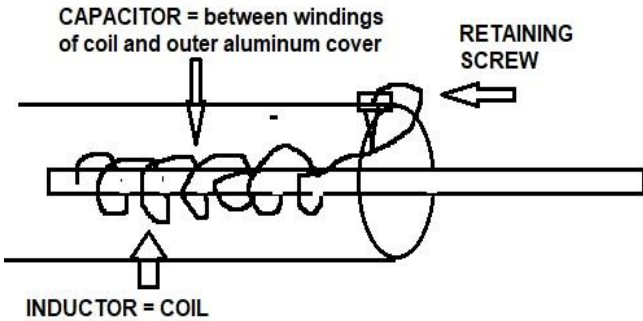




(The photo to the left shows the assembly to allow clamping to an element (one end of a trap) and to the trap cover (the other end of the Mosley trap's parallel resonant circuit.) )

**DISCOVERY**

The 10 meter (inner) trap on the one side of the reflector was **SHORTED for RF**. After a good bit of head-scratching it became obvious the single screw securing the cover was too long, and had shorted out the trap. A newly-ground, shorter stainless steel screw replaced it and now the trap at least looked like a trap again.



The drawing to the left shows how the screw shorted out the trap.

So we are ready for NEW MEASUREMENTS to see if the beam finally works!

Outer cover is both part of the CAPACITOR of both traps, it is also part of the 15meter and 20meter antenna length!

**TO BE CONTINUED...**

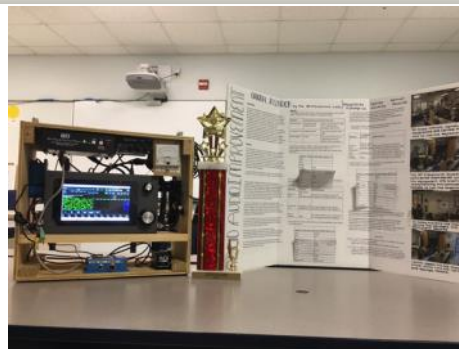




## Ham Radio Experiment Wins Top High School Science Fair Award

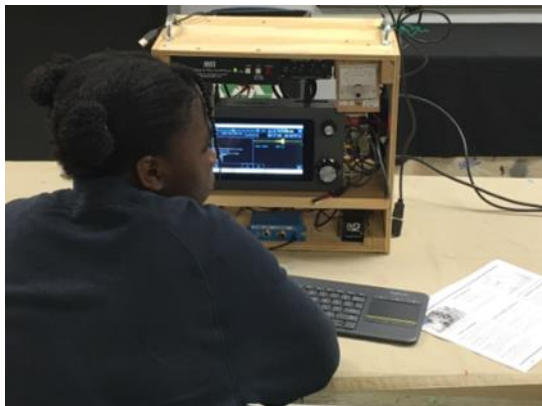
by Gordon Gibby KX4Z

Three teenage girls walked off with the top award of the Cornerstone Academy Science Fair for their study of systems to mitigate high frequency hearing loss in older persons. Their experiment, one of almost 40 entries, showed that the intelligibility of words contaminated by white noise was quite significantly improved when the transmitter was modified to transmit additional high frequency emphasis, countering the simulated high frequency hearing loss.



Winning Science Fair Entry, Trophy and the SDR Transmitter

The young ladies' AP math course (PreCalculus, a common 11th grade course) at their Gainesville, FL private college-prep school included the mathematics of sine waves, so the experiment meshed well with what they were studying, and their mathematics skills made it possible for them understand the concepts of different frequencies of sine waves, and different amplitudes of the waves brought about by mathematical emphasis of certain frequency ranges, using the Fast Fourier Transforms inside the sBitx software-defined-radio.



A modified sBitx receiver was set to have a quite significant high frequency reduction. Listening through headphones allowed the students to really hear what some eighty-year-old people often have to deal with, due to hearing damage. The students were amazed how much harder this made it to recognize consonants and the differences between similar-sounding words!

They used the SPRINT hearing test, used by U.S Armed Forces, which provided them with 200 random words. One member of the group read a series of test words into the microphone of a transmitting sBitx radio, while another monitored and the third was the "receiver." Their poster, presented on the Science Fair Day, included what words were "received" for the actual words spoken, and it was hilarious how words got garbled when there was a simulated high frequency hearing deficit!

The outside independent judges were very impressed with the work the students did and their presentation poster, created by Calista Niolet. She and AseyeShika Nukunya and Hannah Jones were awarded the prestigious "Best of Show" trophy and individual plaques commemorating their success at an awards ceremony held by the school on Friday, April 5th. Each student also received a handout describing how they could list their award on college and job applications.

This is an example of how amateur radio can be successfully integrated into high school STEM education and provide significant enrichment for high school students.

## Things Happening in Alachua County!

by Gordon Gibby KX4Z

<https://www.nf4rc.club/>

GROUPS.IO: <https://groups.io/g/NF4RC/topics>

North Florida Amateur Radio Club (NFARC) Activities Calendar

### Developing Comms To Distant County Fire Stations



*K9RFT with help from many including Shannon Boal K4GLM and Terry Gordon K4TMG have put antennas at several distant county fire stations and have PRACTICE going every Wednesday. Great Job where it counts!!*

### Weekly EOC Backup Radio Training



### Bite Sized Reading for ARRL Summer Field Day

Last year we hit #1 in the 4F Category...this year we will be in very competitive "A" categories so no hope of being top dog -- but as requested we're producing weekly "bite-sized" tasks. 10 minutes of study for improving Field Day Success!

### Alachua County Amateur Assets & Strategies

Alachua County (Amateur) Comms Plan

Voice Repeaters: provided primarily by Gainesville Amateur Radio Society, among others: 146.820 (tone 123.0) is primary.

Simplex: (See ICS-205) typ 146.550

Local HF Winlink RMS: KX4Z

VHF VARA WINLINK: 144.990 KX4Z-12; W4DFU-12

AX.25 WINLINK: 145.070 (multiple)

Local SHARES HF WINLINK: NND4FL

Current Badged Volunteers

### Inter-County & Statewide Comms:

HF Amateur Voice NF4AC NF4RC

HF SHARES Voice NCS181

HF Amateur Winlink NF4AC NF4RC

HF SHARES Winlink NCS181

(Pactor 4 / VARA)

HF SHARES ALE (ION2G)

Sat Phone / "Walkie Talkie" Group

EMP-hardened HF

QuintPlexor allows multiple simultaneous HF nets

### ARRL ARES(R) Training

Evaluators: 3

Level 3: 3

Level 2: 9

Level 1: 15

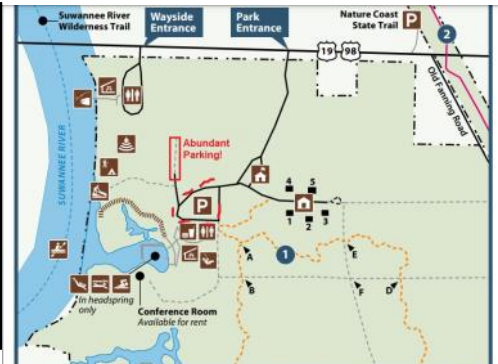
KO4ZSD, Reid Tillery K9RFT, Dean Covey KV4RL, and Wendell Wright KN4TWS, along with me and Leland Gallup AA3YB, have been keeping up an incredible Wednesday EOC Training program recently, activating almost every radio in our EOC backup radio room and cross training right and left! Go guys!

### SIMPLEX VHF NETS

Outgrowth of our Winter Field Day Improvement Plans -- 8 "simplex" county-wide nets this year. The first was led by Dave Huckstep W4JIR and actually went off with little trouble at all -- almost everyone was able to be checked into the net either directly or with a little "relaying." Eric Pleace KO4ZSD activated the County EOC and reported their 60-foot antennas could hear "almost everyone." This will be repeated 7 more times this year to develop better strategies and radio assets.

### FLORIDA QSO PARTY

We are planning an EXPEDITION for the Florida QSO Party as FIELD DAY pileup training! Teaching our volunteers how to "hold a frequency." Plan is to use (a) **generator trailer/mast** and (b) **Travel Trailer with mast** and (c) **End Fed Half Wave stretched between them**. Use QuintPlexor to run *simultaneous ops on 2 HF bands*. 2 hours (8 operator slots, 30 minutes) in LEVY COUNTY (Fanning Springs State Park) and 2 hours in DIXIE COUNTY (trailer parking back of the Old Town Hardees). WHAT FUN!!! We have about six ops signed up!



Fanning Springs State Park - parking plan



**Signup:** contact Gordon KX4Z (docvacuumtubes at gmail)  
**Location:** Beautiful 211-acre Cuscowilla Nature Retreat near Micanopy (former YMCA camp)  
**Facilities:** Using Lodge conference room / kitchens + Cabin (1/2 for operating, and 1/2 for sleeping)  
**Antennas:** Planning for portable tower TA33Jr + End Fed Half Wave + Off Center Fed Vertical + ?? MARC  
**Quintplexor** to allow simultaneous ops.  
**Tricks:** Working toward same band ops 20/40 meters (fair success last year on 20 CW/Digital)  
**Building:** Attempting UltraSharp Rx Filters, more bandpass filters  
**Training:** Multiple month training program, TechNite talks on computers, software, strategies; LabNLunches to build bandpass and other filters.

12 operators game for the challenge so far! 1200 contacts last year, don't know how we will do this year -- 50kW FM station just outside our location.... Lost a few ops this year, picked up and mentored new ones. Completely new location. Beam....is a "work in progress." We try hard to **mentor new ops and help them grow!**



# Inovato Quadra – HamClock

by Bert Garcia N8NN



HamClock display.

The Inovato Quadra is a tiny computer that runs the HamClock software on your monitor or TV. It displays a world map with day/night shading, DX spots, sunspot numbers, clock, and numerous other items of ham radio interest. The Quadra measures about 4" x 4" x 3/4". If you order the bundle for \$59 plus shipping (<https://inovato.com>), you get everything you need to run the HamClock – Quadra, stand, cooling fan, wireless mini keyboard with touchpad, 4-port USB hub, HDMI cable, USB wall wart, and USB power cable. The Quadra has built-in wifi, so you don't need the optional Bluetooth/wifi dongle. If you use your own USB keyboard and mouse, you can save \$10 by eliminating the mini keyboard. Your monitor or TV should display 1080p or higher resolution.



Photo 2 – Inovato bundle.



Photo 3 – Front view.



Photo 4 – Rear view.



## FCC Testing Information

### Daytona Beach Amateur Radio Assn (DBARA)

- Monthly, third Monday, 5:30 PM, prior to meeting
- Lehman Building, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
- Registration Required
- Info: <https://dbara.org/testing/>

### 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](mailto:sumterVE@gmail.com)

### Lake ARA, Leesburg FL

- Monthly on the 3rd Saturday, prior to 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
- William Beardall Senior Center 800 S Delaney Ave Orlando FL 32801.
- Info: [testing@OARC.org](mailto:testing@OARC.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 sign up 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

- Last Saturday of the month
- Suwannee Regional Library
- Contact Gerald Guy, [geraldguy@gmail.com](mailto:geraldguy@gmail.com)

### 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. <sup>®</sup> <http://www.k4tlh.org/getting-started/license-testing>

### West Volusia Amateur Radio Society

- Second Saturday of each odd numbered month
- 6:00 AM
- St. Johns Lodge #37, 2557 N. Spring Garden Ave, Deland FL
- Info: <https://westvars.org/testing>

### Gainesville Amateur Radio Society

- 1st Saturday of even numbered months
- Tech day two weeks after testing
- <https://gars.club/Testing.html>

### 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!

**Testing information is subject to change. Check with the testing venue to confirm the testing session and requirements.**