



# QST NFL



*Providing timely and interesting information to Radio Amateurs in North Florida*

Volume 4, Issue 6

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

June 2017

## Steve's Take:

NFL Section Manager  
Steve Szabo, WB4OMM



Greetings North Florida Hams!

**Welcome to the GREATEST HOBBY  
IN THE WORLD!**

Wow, I had a busy month in May!

As I am still the EOC and EM fella at the City of Daytona Beach, I ran two seminars, two workshops, and a citywide hurricane tabletop exercise for my City; plus, attended the Volusia County Hurricane Tabletop and After-Action workshop exercises, and the Statewide Hurricane Exercise. Lotsa' hurricane prep items on the desk....along with planning for the Coke Zero 400 and a Shriner's Convention in July! Two trips to the University of Central Florida in Orlando; one locally for the University of Phoenix. Started delivering a face-to-face UCF course, and taking an online UCF faculty development course. Mother's Day!

Whew!

I was at the OARC (Orlando) club meeting on May 3<sup>rd</sup> .....as usual, had a blast! Always enjoy this group's meetings (they have good doughnuts and coffee.....<grin>). I also got to see the Hamcation folks and some of the club officers in Xenia as they were up there to "scope out" Hamvention. Friday night I had dinner with these excellent folks and truly enjoyed being with them! OARC and it's members are a Class Act! Thank you for treating me so well.

I made the trip to Xenia, Ohio for the 2017 Dayton Hamvention in it's new digs at the Greene County Fairgrounds & the Four Days in May (FDIM) CW/QRP gathering in Fairborn, Ohio during the same time frame. I only did Vendor night and the banquet for FDIM but saw quite a few nice folks.

So.....Xenia and Hamvention. Let it suffice to say, DARA's Hamvention has some "issues" to work out! But in fairness, a smaller location, new site, new everything presents many new and unanticipated challenges! With time I'm sure they will get everything worked out. (For a line by line synopsis, go to my web page and review my Dayton Hamvention post - [www.wb4omm.com](http://www.wb4omm.com)).

While at Hamvention, I attended the ARRL Forum. ARRL CEO Tom Gallagher, NY2RF, and ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR, both spoke. And to these two presentations, I must provide you the summary and comment.

I was impressed with both of these gents. Particularly with the statements that we need to re-evaluate how to keep our new licensees and maintain our position in the radio "spectrum". Technology has changed, America and how we communicate has changed, and the World and how we communicate has changed. And while both of these fellas made it clear that we are always in a "state of transition" as radio amateurs,

## What's inside

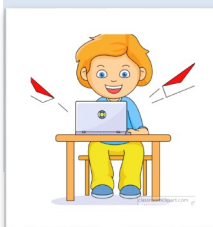
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Email your QST NFL input to  
[WB2VYK@gmail.com](mailto:WB2VYK@gmail.com)  
Marty Brown, WB2VYK, Editor

SM Message, Continued

they both kept it positive. I really liked Tom's analogy of "bricks". You build a building one brick at a time. That individual brick (size, shape, strength, density, ability to withstand pressure) is paramount. It is the 'bedrock'. With all of the other bricks it defines our ability to survive. Each ham (especially the new folks) are like bricks; when "made right" they support our hobby in a positive way. When ignored or treated poorly, they are "lost" or become "unusable". Both Tom and Rick asked everyone in the audience to, "pick up a brick". I support that request and encourage **ALL OF YOU READING THIS TO GO OUT AND PICK UP A BRICK.** Go out and mentor a new ham, encourage an interested person to get licensed, introduce a friend or acquaintance to a new mode or facet of the hobby. Do something new. Learn something new. Get better at something you know and **SHARE IT.** The analogy wasn't lost on me. It makes perfect sense. We need to change. We need to "survive".

I hope to see you soon and say, "Hi" face-to-face! And a reminder.....wildfires are already here, and hurricane season starts today, so get prepared and get ready! It appears this may be an active season.

Some upcoming events....

Field Day is this month. Get out there and get experience! Invite new folks, try new modes. Make sure you advertise and send in reports on your operations. I am waiting on Governor Scott's office to send me the Florida State Proclamation for Amateur Radio Week.....I hope to get it soon, and will forward/post it as soon as I get it.

The Milton Hamfest is July 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Get more info at: <http://www.miltonarc.org/MiltonAmetuerRadio-Flyers.pdf>

Check out our fabulous NFL Section Web Page and read our spectacular Newsletter (June issue) *QST NFL*. <http://arrl-nfl.org/>

Get involved, get active, get happy! Stay safe, get on the air, and have fun!!

**EVERYONE COUNTS!**

**73, Steve WB4OMM**



**Steve Szabo WB4OMM**

**NFL Section Manager**

**ARRL, The National Association for Amateur Radio™**

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## John Ellis, NP2B, Has Classic Radio Article in June QST

QST NFL Contributing Editor, John Ellis, NP2B, has another article in the June 2017 *QST*. Check out the Classic Radio column on page 102. John's topic is the Astatic D-104 microphone.



## Alachua County ARES 2017 Full Scale Hurricane Communications Exercise

by Gordon Gibby KX4Z NCS521

Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> dawned spring-like crisp and clear, a beautiful morning in Gainesville, Florida, but dark foreboding was in the hearts of many local hams as they raced to get their equipment set up before (simulated) Hurricane ARES arrived at 9 AM. A total of 17 volunteers encompassing the local ARES group, Alachua County Emergency Operating Center, and the Florida Division of Forestry were about to begin the largest known ham radio disaster simulation in the history of Alachua County. For the next four hours, they would simulate two days of hurricane-devastated communications, and attempt to pass every bit of emergency message traffic assigned to them.

Aided by Robert Stewart of the Division of Forestry and his mobile 100-foot radio tower, Asst. Section Manager Jeff Capehart, volunteers Susan Halbert and Gus Clifton hoisted up two VHF antennas and an HF wire antenna, as Asst. EM Jeff Bielling, the Evaluator for that center, observed. Similar hurried antenna work was going on simultaneously at two Hurricane Shelters (the Senior Center: John Troupe MD, and Rosemary Jones; Easton-Newberry Sport Center: Vann Chesney, Barry Nason with Larry Rovak) and setup was also in full swing at the local Red Cross with Chris Carr, Cheryl Carr, Art & Cindy Grant. Local GARS club President Pete Winters



*Ham radio volunteers at the Sr. Center hurricane shelter*

and his wife were Evaluators at the Senior Center, Jeff Bielling at the EOC, and Larry Rovak in Newberry.

All of the groups were dealing with unfamiliar ICS sign-in & communications log forms, and written evaluation forms, as they checked into the pre-hurricane simulation Net between 0830 and 0900, then filed ICS-213 status reports by radio email to the mock State EOC. Earlier that morning, the local WINLINK hybrid gateway had “lost” internet & power, switched to radio-only mode, using solar-powered backup battery operation – and promptly crashed! A buggy RMS\_RELAY software version was frantically replaced and the system brought back up just in time for the Exercise --- the goal

of which was to thoroughly test all our assets, skills and strategies, and local weak points. We were already finding them....

Spread out between 4 locations spanning much of the county, at 0900 each group opened their own sealed envelopes to discover what the simulated Hurricane had wreaked on their location, and their message tasks for the next hour. Paper hardcopy and USB flash drives gave the bad news: all voice repeaters in the county had been knocked out, no phone, no Internet, and there were nearly two dozen messages to be communicated in the next hour alone, using any mode or skill they possessed. “*Losing the repeaters hit us pretty hard,*” commented one volunteer as groups struggled to regain communications with outlying Shelters using a pre-positioned Simplex Repeater – and discovered it didn’t reach two of the centers.



*Forestry Mobile Tower (before extension),  
generator & operator room*

Alachua ARES (Continued)

It was quite eerie not to hear **at all** from another center, and have *no way to know their situation....* exactly as in a real communications emergency. Soon, every hour began with a check-in to see who could still be reached.

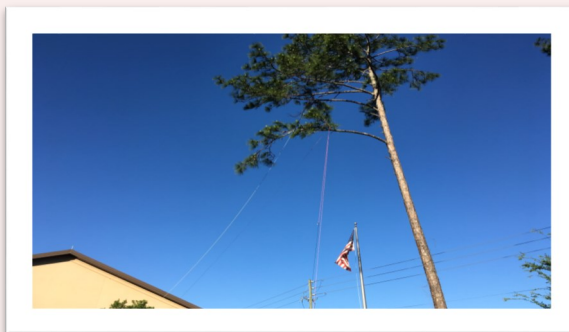
Alachua County presents real problems for VHF simplex communications, with central sites at 190 feet mean sea level, but the EOC a full 60 feet lower, and the far distant western hurricane shelters 90 feet lower. Signals from a 50 foot tower at the EOC are 10 feet underground at the Senior Center.... impossible to reach western edge of the county.

Volunteers slowly regained their footing and by 0930 were beginning to transmit Tactical Messages over simplex voice, while ICS-213's began to flow over packet digital networks (7 digital repeater assets now in our county) toward the HF WINLINK Gateway on the west side of town for HF forwarding out of the (simulated) stricken city. Volunteers at the Red Cross were stuck by a configuration issue and couldn't get their digital system to work. HF was being utilized at the two farthest centers to get WINLINK messages out. HF from the EOC seemed to have zero signal, yet an evaluator easily reached the local WINLINK gateway on 80 meters (and also reached others); more issues! The EOC received a portion of a (simulated) message that half of a huge local hospital had to be evacuated and was begging for communications help – and was *unable to respond with a mobile comms team*, frankly due to a lack of sufficient volunteers. An entire branch of the simulation went down in flames! Additional unexpected requests for medical help with a burn patient came in from co-simulating Marion County hams, over WINLINK. Copious pre-simulation planning had included standardized addresses for adjacent counties to reach each other through multiple redundant techniques; those will be utilized in real situations also. The Participant Workbook emergency documentation ran past 25 pages.

At 1000, another round of envelopes, as the simulation progressed to Day 2. Power outages were declared, and handled with battery and generator backup at some of the sites; message traffic improved as volunteers found more work-arounds using skills developed during the previous nine months. At the 1100 round of envelopes, one repeater was declared “working again”, much to the relief of the groups, and the farthest center was again in voice contact where previously it had only been radio email. Using FM voice, direct packet keyboard to keyboard was arranged and error-free record traffic was easily exchanged using the YAPP protocol.

By 1230 the group was pretty exhausted, the simulation concluded and everyone convened for lunch. 90 minutes of excited reviews ensued of what worked, where problems were found, and how they might be addressed before a **real** disaster scenario. A total of 53 messages --- well beyond the wildest dreams of the simulation designers – had been communicated, though there were problems with the accuracy & timing of some of the transfers. When all the comment sheets and evaluations were analyzed, over 30 “issues” were cataloged on the group's web page and work began on another round of addressing each area of difficulty as this group marches toward real mastery of their craft.

Page after page of evaluations/comments were submitted. The findings included: setup took far longer than expected for most groups; simplex repeater sensitivity needs improvement; digital skills need more practice; message passing skills need more practice; a ladder & antenna analyzer were needed at one location; difficulties with interference on 40 meters; confusion over assigned call signs & frequencies (unexpected change of callsigns from published ICS-205 made radio email flounder) ; insufficient transmission line at one facility; interpersonal problems due to stress; antenna shadowing by a metal building at one site; and a disconcerting lack of quick acknowledgment to WINLINK messages.



*Pine trees and other tall objects pressed into service to hoist all manner of antennas. John Troupe demonstrated the Chuckit! Ball launcher to get that rope up over that limb.*



Alachua ARES (Continued)

**By the Numbers**

Simulation ARES participation	15 volunteers	55% of Alachua County ARES
Additional participants	2	County, state officials
Total messages transacted	53	Includes by any means, with any delay
Modalities utilized:	Voice; WINLINK HF & VHF; Packet YAPP	
"Issues" identified	>30	
Voice Proficiency Score (avg)	9.4	1-10 scale, judged "encouragingly"
Digital Proficiency Score (avg)	7.8	1-10 scale, judged "encouragingly"
Messages documented as transacted on time	27	
Volunteer time during test	85	Man-hours
Estimated training time during previous 9 months.	>>300	Man-hours; 12 mtgs, 2 solder sessions, > 10 antennas constructed
Estimated simulation development time	40	Man-hours

Alachua County has never participated in such a wide-ranging and detailed full scale simulation before—Dve Welker of the Marion County Hospital Emergency Communications group challenged us to create a NIMS-compatible exercise and this was the result! Despite all the issues discovered, our performance was good, and the group was enthusiastic about their achievement and looking forward to the next adventure.

*A compendium of documentation of the exercise, sufficient to allow alteration or replication by other ARES groups, can be found at:*

<http://qsl.net/nf4rc/hurricanetestplan.pdf>



# Escambia County Hurricane Exercise 2017

## ARES After Action Report

Joe McLemore, KF4DVF, AEC

### Summary

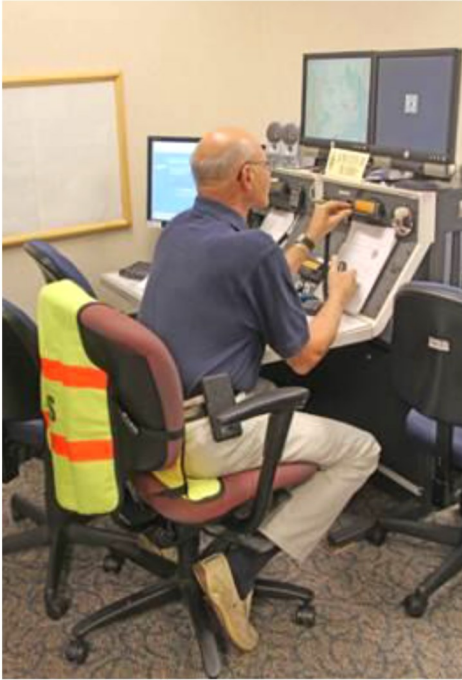
On Wednesday, May 3, 2017, Escambia County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) participated in the annual Escambia County Hurricane Exercise.

- 19 Amateur Radio Operators and stations.
  - 12 Escambia County ARES, 7 non-ARES.
- ARES room in the EOC was activated and staffed by 5 ARES members.
  - Additionally, 1 ARES member staffing another agency desk at the EOC stopped by the ARES room.
- Escambia County Emergency Net (local ARES net) was activated.
  - In addition to the ARES members already at the EOC, 13 additional stations checked in on the local net.
- Statewide communications
  - First time use of the SARNET, using the UHF repeater in Crestview
  - Checked into the Northern Florida ARES sectionwide net via D-RATS
- Simulated deployments of ARES members to multiple locations to cover PODs and shelters.
- Multiple VHF/UHF frequencies used, including digital modes.
- 7 digital messages sent and received.
  - Successful testing of using digital modes (Winlink) for sending/receiving messages:
    - Long-distance on HF.
    - Locally on VHF.
- Training of additional ARES members to staff the ARES room.
- Estimated 20.9 person-hours for the exercise itself.

### Radio Modes used

- Tactical net – VHF – Escambia County Emergency Net (Local ARES net) on 146.76 repeater successfully used.
- Statewide net – UHF – could access the SARNET via the Crestview repeater. This is a first time that we have been able to do this task in an exercise.
- Also checked into the Northern Florida ARES state net using D-RATS chat.
- Digital modes
  - APRS.
  - E-mail using HF freq (Winlink) –
  - 2 ARES activation messages sent to Northern Florida Section Emergency Coordinator (ARES) and to the Section Manager.
  - Sent 5 digital messages via VHF frequency (Winlink Peer to Peer) using one of the jump kits equipment to the radios at the EOC.
    - 2 test messages
    - 2 Red Cross ICS213 messages, simulating messages from Tate High and Molino Elementary shelters
    - 1 Hospital Bed Count message
  - The two Red Cross messages were then sent to the Red Cross desk via message feature in WebEOC.
  - Azalea Trace Winlink system
    - HF system was not operational on HF. Will be fixed shortly
    - They are working on adding VHF P2P capability by next Fall.

Escambia, (Continued)



N4SAR at VHF workstation



Red Cross agency rep visiting ARES room. WS4SW and N4SAR also in picture



KB4TXY



KF4DVF working on receiving digital messages via Winlink and putting them into WebEOC.

All pictures taken by N4XXO.

## Northern Florida STM Reports for May 2017

Tom Housworth KI0JO Section Traffic Manager

### Station Activity Reports

CALLSIGN	TOTAL
KI0JO	565
KZ8Q	182
WB4RJW	64
KK4BNL	61
WC4FSU	47
N3JUY	32
W4NFG	16
K4HGH	6

### Public Service Honor Roll

CALLSIGN	TOTAL
KF4DVF	151
KI0JO	120
K4JGA	120
WC4FSU	110
N3JUY	110
WD3B	110
KK4BNL	105
KZ8Q	90
WB4RJW	90
KB4VOH	72
N9MN	70
KJ4HGH	66

### Brass Pounders League

CALLSIGN	TOTAL
KI0JO	565



### Nets

NET	ABB.	QNI	QT C	QND	SESS	MGR
Florida Phone Traffic Net	FPTN	1213	157	773	31	WC4FSU/
Northern Florida ARES Net	NFARES	1825	22	893	27	W4NFG
Northern Florida D Star Net	NFDSN	64	1	72	4	W4NFG
Northern Florida D-Rats Net	NFDRN	34	1	53	3	W4NFG
Gulf Coast VHF Training Net	GCVTN	804	30	387	31	K4QBH
Seminole VHF Traffic Net	SVTN	414	55	545	29	KG4QCD
North Florida Phone Net	NFPN	1840	3	845	31	AI4GF
Lake County ARES	LCARES	190	14	208	14	N4KXO
Walton County Amateur Radio	WCARC	261	14	198	14	K4NDJ



## Upcoming Hamfests

- June 20, 2017 – ARC at UCF Tailgate, Orlando, FL <http://www2.mmae.ucf.edu/wiki/Tailgate> **NEW!**
- August 12, 2017 – Fort Pierce Hamfest, Fort Pierce, FL <http://FPARC.org>
- August 19, 2017 – TARCfest, Tampa, FL <http://www.hamclub.org>
- September 9, 2017 – 3rd Annual Lakeland ARC Hamfest, Lakeland, FL <http://lakelandarc.org> **NEW!**
- September 23, 2017 – Pasco County HamFest, Odessa, FL <http://sarcfl.com>
- October 13, 2017 – Florida State Convention – 52nd Annual Melbourne Hamfest & 2017 ARRL State Convention, Melbourne, FL <http://www.pcars.org>
- October 28, 2017 – Fall 2017 Cy Harris, Oakland Park, FL <http://browardarc.net/free-flea/>
- October 28, 2017 – Jacksonville FREE Hamfest, Jacksonville, FL <http://nofars.net> **NEW!**



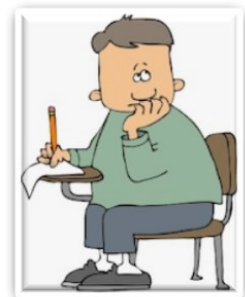
## FCC Testing Information

### LMARS FCC Testing

- Every odd month (January, March, May, July, September, November)
- Fourth Saturday
- 9:15 AM
- Seminole County Sheriff's Office
- Off SR 17-92, on 100 Bush Blvd in Sanford (across from Flea World)
- For more information and registration, contact Bob Cumming, W2BZY, 407-333-0690

### North Florida ARS

- Weeknight testing for all grades of license in Feb., May, Aug. and Nov.
- Hogan Baptist Church at the corner of Hogan Rd. and Parental Home Rd. in Southside.
- Advance registration is required. See [http://nofars.net/home/fcc\\_testing](http://nofars.net/home/fcc_testing)



### Lake ARA

- Monthly on the 3rd Saturday, prior to monthly meeting. (Except December)
- 8:00 AM
- [LARA Clubhouse](#) (11146 Springdale Ave, Leesburg – off of CR 473)
- For more information and registration, contact David A. Pennell, NP2MR (352) 602-5164 [np2mr@yahoo.com](mailto:np2mr@yahoo.com) in advance of the meeting.

### Suwannee ARC

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

## Section Nets.....

For net details go to [www.arrl-nfl.org](http://www.arrl-nfl.org) and select the Nets option.

Net	Frequency	Day/Time (Local)
Central Florida D-Star Training Net	REF046C. D-Rats nfl.ratflector.net	Wednesday, 0900
Clay County ARES Net	146.925, Tone 156.7	Sunday, 1930
Crestview Gulf Coast VHF Training Net (GCVTN)	147.360, (+), PL 100Hz	Daily, 20:00
Crestview SARNet	Statewide UHF Net on linked repeaters on 444.900, (+) PL 100Hz	Friday, 0900
Crown District ARES Net	145.925 (156.7)	First Wednesday, 2030
Defuniak Springs Walton County ARC Net	147.285 (+), PL 100Hz	Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 1930
Duval County ARES Net	146.70 (127.3)ALT:147.315(127.3)	Wednesday, 1930
Florida Hurricane Net,	D-Star REF037C	Monday, 2100
Fort Walton Beach – Playground ARC Net	146.790, (-), PL 100Hz	Sunday, 2000
Friendship ARC—Ocala	146.61, PL 123	Monday, 1600
Hog County Amateur Radio Assn Net , K4HOG, Bushnell FL	145.490, PL 123.0	Monday, 2000
Madison County ARES Madison County ARC	145.190, Lee Repeater, PL 123	Sunday, 2100
Milton 2-Meter Net	145.490 (-), PL 100Hz	Monday, 2000
Milton Santa Rosa County ARES Net	146.700 (-), PL 100Hz	Tuesday, 2000
Nassau County ARES Net	147.000 (-) (127.3)	Wednesday, 2030 (Except 1st Wed)
NFL ARES Net	7.242, Primary 3.950, Secondary	Monday-Saturday, 0900
NFL D-Star Net	REF046C, D-Rats on nfl.ratflector.net.	Wednesday, 0900
NFL Digital Net	3.590 PSK 31, USB	Sunday, 1900
NFL Phone Net (NFPN)	3950 Alt 7242 and 7247	Daily, 1930
Northwest Florida DX Net	147.555 (simplex)	Tuesday, 1930
Okaloosa County ARES Net WIRES-X System in FM (not digital)	442.950 (DCS023) North Area 444.800 (100 Hz) South Area	Monday, 1930
Orange County ARES Net and Skywarn	443.050	Thursday, 1900
Pensacola Escambia County ARES Net	146.760, PL 100Hz	Monday, 1930
QCWA Citrus Chapter 45	147.195	Tuesday, 1930, Echolink W2AS-L, #node 627152
QCWA Suwannee Chapter 62, Ocala	3940	Saturday, 0900
QCWA The Villages Chapter 217	443.150, PL 103.5	Friday, 1000
QFN CW Traffic Net	3547 Winter (7105 Summer)	Daily, 1900
Santa Rosa County Skywarn Net	146.700, K4SRC Repeater	Monday, 2000

**Section Nets, continued.....**

SAR NET	<a href="http://sarnetfl.com">http://sarnetfl.com</a>	Click 140614_FDOT_UWAVE_Map_with_UHF_coverage.16664435
Seminole VHF Traffic Net	147.090 MHz, offset of +600, PL 103.5 147.450 Simplex	Daily, 1915 First Monday, 19:15
St. Johns County ARES	147.210 (127.3) ALT:147.015 (127.3)	Wednesday, 2000
SSRC (Silver Springs Radio Club) Net SSRC Ragchew Net SSRC Skywarn/ARES SSRC MERT	146.610 pl 123 28453 146.610 pl 123 146.610 pl 123	Monday, 2100 Monday, 2200 Wednesday, 2130 Thursday, 2130
Suwannee ARES/Emergency Prep Net	145.270 PL 123 145/410 PL 123 FSQ— 3.594 MHz	Thursday, 2030
TARS News and Information Net	147.030+, PL 94.8	Thursday, 2000
TFN Tropical Florida Sideband Traffic Net	3942	Daily, 2145
The Villages Amateur Radio Club (TVARC) Ragchew Net	443.225, PL 103.5 Echolink K4VRC-R	Monday, 1745
Traders Net	3.933	Sunday, 0800
Valparaiso Twin Cities Amateur Radio	146.73, (-), no PL tone	Sunday, 2030
VCTN Volusia County Traffic Net	147.150, +.600, tone 127.3 145.330, -.600, tone 127.3 (Alt)	Daily, 2245
Walton County ARES Net	147.375 (+), PL 100Hz	Wednesday, 1900

**NFL Officials****Section Manager** – Stephen W. Szabo WB4OMM**Assistant Section Managers** – Joseph D. Bushnel W2DWR,  
John C Reynolds W4IJJ, Dave Davis WA4WES, Jeff Capehart  
W4UFL, Neil Light KK4VHX, Ray Crepeau K1HG**Section Emergency Coordinator** – Strait Hollis KT4YA**Assistant SE Coordinator** – Robert A. Mitchell W4HKG**Section Technical Coordinator** – Frank Haas KB4T**Affiliated Club Coordinator** – Steve Palmer KM4SDP**Section Traffic Manager** – Tom Housworth, K1OJO**Official Observer Coordinator** – Rick A. Lloyd AA4W**State Government Liaison** – Darrell Brock N4GOA**QST NFL****Newsletter of the Northern Florida Section**

1. Spread the word about our website [www.arrl-nfl.org](http://www.arrl-nfl.org) and **QST NFL** on your club web-site, in a newsletter or at a meeting.
2. Send a write-up and picture of your next activity.
3. Make sure you, or the appropriate member of your club is on the email reminder list.
4. **Contact: Marty Brown WB2VYK, [wb2vyk@gmail.com](mailto:wb2vyk@gmail.com)**

**QST NFL** is a monthly publication of the ARRL Northern Florida Section. **QST NFL** is intended for wide distribution within the NFL Section, including club Leaders and all licensed Amateurs in Florida. A current issue of this publication can be found at the ARRL Southeastern Division web site, Northern Florida Section. [www.ARRL-NFL.org](http://www.ARRL-NFL.org) Opinions expressed by writers are their own, and may not express the positions of the ARRL. Submissions may be made to the editor, Marty Brown, WB2VYK, [wb2vyk@gmail.com](mailto:wb2vyk@gmail.com).

**Spread the Word**