



# QST NFL



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

Volume 2, Issue 12

**Happy Holidays from QST NFL!**

December 2015

## Steve's Take:

### NFL Section Manager Steve Szabo, WB4OMM



Good Day to You! I hope this message finds you enjoying the Greatest Hobby and Service in the World!

Last week, most of us (I hope!) celebrated the Thanksgiving Holiday. We have much to be thankful for. Our hobby is growing; we discover, adapt, and use new technologies; we provide a valuable service to our communities with no cost to them. We share our diverse Amateur Radio Service in Morse Code, public service messaging, phone, digital, contesting, QRP, (whatever!) not only with our fellow citizens, but with folks around the world.

Which bring me to my next thoughts.....remember what is MOST IMPORTANT in this holiday season (and the rest of the year too!!) – PEOPLE! While listening on the radio over the years I often hear what I consider careless or inconsiderate operating. Not FCC rule violations, but sometimes just failing to ask if the frequency is in use; the “tuning up” (carrier only) on the DX, net, or contest operations oblivious to those operating; running our mic gain wide open; and RF getting into the mic or the key clicks/60 Hz buzz on the CW signal. I am always (still) surprised on PSK31 looking at a signal so bright, thick, and wide it tells me the op never bothered to “set” his/her equipment correctly. All of these impact our fellow operators by interfering with another’s communication, taking up valuable bandwidth, and making for “difficult copy”. Ditto in our personal and face-to-face “communications” with others, particularly non-hams. Patience, a little thought, and realizing “who” we are talking with might keep us from hurting someone’s feelings, alienating outsiders (the non-hams) or give all of us a “bad reputation”.

I guess what I am trying to say is we should “remember the reason for the season” and take a good look at ourselves before we cast those stones! Know your equipment (and how to PROPERLY make the correct adjustments) and think before you “do”. Be the best operator, the most courteous, and have the best engineering practices you can. It all makes a difference. Be part of the solution or part of the problem. Your choice!

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

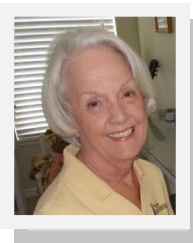
My sincere best wishes to all for a safe and happy holiday season for the end of 2015; and my fervent hope all will have a prosperous New Year!

## EVERYONE COUNTS!

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## From the Editor:

Marty Brown, WB2VYK  
[wb2vyk@gmail.com](mailto:wb2vyk@gmail.com)



There’s just no end to the exciting interests and activities of NFL members. Many of these are now on the record in this month’s issue.

**John Ellis, NP2B**, discusses how to approach the situation with faulty ARC Fault Circuit Interrupters in his second article on this troublesome subject.

**Stan Zawrotny, K4SBZ**, reminds us of Ham Radio’s depth and scope in his article *It’s Not Fun Anymore*.

**George Briggs, K2DM**, provides us with pictures and details of his recent trip to Montserrat for the CQWW DX SSB Contest in October.

**Byron Engen, WN4R**, takes us back in time with his first article in the series, *A History of Ham Radio*.

**HamCation** is right around the corner. Information has been provided by **Peter Meijers AI4KM**, Chairman.



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**Contributing Editor:**

John Ellis, NP2B

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**ARC FAULT CIRCUIT INTERRUPTERS**

Last month I wrote about the three types of circuit breakers in common household use today, and why the relatively new arc-fault type of circuit breaker, or circuit interrupter (aka "AFCI"), poses a big threat to HF amateur radio activity. I explained that these arc-fault breakers have circuitry within them designed to detect extremely short low amplitude pulses on the circuits they protect. (When the insulation on a conductor starts to break down, the first indication is a very short duration low amplitude arc). I also explained that the circuitry within some of these breakers cannot differentiate between these short duration arcs and an RF signal generated by an amateur radio transmitter operating close by.

One thing that I failed to mention last month is that not all arc-fault breakers are susceptible to RF interference from amateurs operating in the HF spectrum. Some breakers have microprocessors installed within them that look for longer duration pulses, and they tend to be more immune to tripping from high frequency RF than the ones looking for shorter duration waveforms or pulses.

So, what are we to do if our HF rig is tripping these arc-fault devices?

In new construction, it is fairly simple. The house will generally have a builder's warranty. The builder will contact the electrical contractor, who will contact the distributor or manufacturer directly, and the RF susceptible breakers will be exchanged with units that are not RF susceptible at no charge to the customer, and all will be fine. Given the density of homes here in The Villages, this might require changing out up to 8 breakers in up to a dozen houses. If we do the math, 8 arc-fault breakers per house times 12 houses, assuming a retail price of \$50.00 per breaker, equals \$4800.00 plus the cost of 12 service calls. No small change here, but it's all covered under warranty and everybody is happy.

The real problem comes into focus when a ham moves into an area that is several years old, or an existing resident gets an amateur radio license and sets up a station in an area where these breakers are installed

and from which no ham has ever operated. Neighbors will naturally accuse the ham of interfering with their electrical service and insist that he or she stop transmitting.

How do we fix it? In short we can't. It has to be done at the manufacturing level. One solution might be for the manufacturer to program the microprocessor in the breaker to look for a longer duration pulse, perhaps a full microsecond or more. Then, possibly, it would not react to someone operating his or her ham radio transmitter on the high frequency amateur radio frequencies. Another might be for them to install additional RF filtering. How this could be done, I don't know, but Eaton Electric has done a pretty good job in some of their breakers. Not perfect, but getting close. A third alternative might be for them to program the microprocessor within the breaker itself to be able to differentiate between an actual low amplitude short duration arc and a legitimate ham radio signal. (This has got to be a whole lot easier said than done!)

So what is the solution? Assuming the house is over a year old, it is technically out of warranty. The ham radio operator is doing nothing illegal or out of the ordinary. He or she simply wants to operate his or her properly licensed ham radio station in a normal fashion, the way it has been done for years and years. Does this fall under part 15 of the FCC rules and regulations? I've heard yes and no.

It's a problem that many of us will have to contend with and its not going away by itself. Hopefully we'll all find a solution before it gets totally out of hand.

**QST NFL welcomes....**

The ARRL Executive Committee has approved **The Central Florida CB and Ham Radio Club's** application for affiliation with the ARRL.  
Angel L. Arce Torres, KP4UFO, President

**Suwannee ARES/Emergency Preparedness Net** is conducted by the Suwannee Amateur Radio Club (SARC) on Thursday at 20:30 local time with check ins on the Wellborn 145.270 (pl123) and Live Oak 145.410 (pl123) repeaters followed by roll calls on other designated repeaters and simplex. Stations may also check in using FSQ at 3.594 MHz (+/- QRM). More info.- [suwanneearc.org](http://suwanneearc.org)



Get Ready For...

# ORLANDO HamCation<sup>SM</sup> SEVENTY YEARS 2016

**Amateur Radio & Computer Show**  
ARRL National Convention & ARRL EXPO under the  
sponsorship of the Orlando Amateur Radio Club  
**February 12, 13, & 14**

AT THE CENTRAL FLORIDA FAIRGROUNDS  
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- Largest Tailgate Area in the Southeast • D-Star Talk-In on 146.820 Ref 37C



Orlando HamCation is a registered trademark of the Orlando Amateur Radio Club.





## A History of Ham Radio

by Byron Engen, WN4R, wn4r12@gmail.com

I became interested in the history of ham radio shortly after I found out that my ticket issued on July 23,

1951 made me the first Novice Class Operator in the State of North Dakota. I lost my license in 1968 due to missing the one year grace period for renewal after inactivity due to family obligations and job transfers. I continued my interest in ham radio and returned to ham radio in February 1989 starting over with Novice and passing Extra in August 1989. Like riding a bicycle one never forgets CW.

Before beginning with the history of ham radio, I feel it is necessary to review a little bit of the history of the work of physicists, scientists, and scholars who preceded the beginning of ham radio. You may be familiar with names because many are now recognized by the assigning of their names as units of electrical properties. In the 1800's men such as Volta, Ohm, Ampere, Faraday, Henry, Hertz, Oerstad, Maxwell, Morse, Marconi, and others performed experiments to develop and prove their findings. (More information about each person is available on Wikipedia for those who want to learn more about these great minds.)

Samuel F. B. Morse developed a system of code for use in the first wired telegraph systems. His first experiment was to use all dots which printed on a paper strip and then counted by hand to translate to letters. He quickly found this too cumbersome and then developed the combination of dots, dashes, and spaces which he developed into the American Morse code system. American Morse, sometimes called Railroad Morse, adapted well to the click and clack sounders that the railroads used into the 1950s. Some of the letters and numbers are the same in American Morse as in International Morse (used by wireless) while some characters in American Morse have spaces within a letter or even long dashes. For example in American Morse the letter C is two dots-space-one dot and the character Ø is a long dash which is equal to the length of a dot-dash-dash. The railroad station agents were trained for relatively high speed, accurate copy. The small town station operators also provided Western Union service in their communities. I used to go to the railroad depot in my small hometown in North

Dakota and listen and watch Mr. Swanson copy grain market reports every morning for delivery to the grain elevator manager.

In 1896 Marconi used wireless for a contact over 2 miles. In 1901 he made contact with Europe from a high powered station at St. John's, Newfoundland. VO1IMD station is now at the location to demonstrate ham radio to the public. I visited the site in 2003, but the control operator was absent and the station shut down.

*On to ham radio history.* We don't know the identity of the first ham radio operator. Some people credit Marconi, but even though he considered him-self an amateur, rather than a scientist, he was never licensed as a ham. Most agree that amateur radio started shortly after the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. About that time, amateurs began "tinkering" in an attempt to make radio signals. Construction articles began to appear in print. From the work of the 19<sup>th</sup> century scientists it became apparent that a signal with a very broadband spectrum could be formed by causing a spark to be generated with high voltage across a controlled gap. A tuned antenna circuit was added to the circuit capacitor for discharge across the gap. Thus RF was fed into the tuned circuit coupled to an antenna. Due to the raspy sound and broadband signal that was transmitted made it almost impossible for two neighbors to operate at the same time. With design of rotary spark gap transmitters better signals, but still broadband, resulted.

Most amateurs used a galena crystal with "cat's whisker" and a variable inductance coil for their receiver. Needless to say their stations were rudimentary. But amateurs continued to experiment and improve their stations.

About 1904, Fleming, a British scientist, invented the Fleming valve which was an evacuated tube with a filament and a plate making the first diode. A few years later the American, Lee DeForest, added a grid to the diode making a triode. It was several years following before experiments proved the triode could be used for transmitting.

## A History of Ham Radio, Continued

As amateurs began transmitting they would select their own call using their initials or some combination of 2 or 3 letters. Ham radio was on its way! The number of amateurs grew rapidly and confusion reigned with self-chosen calls with many duplicates and lots of QRM.

Most “learned” types considered any wave length less than 200 meters was useless. QRM was unbelievable. The amateurs were causing severe QRM for the Navy and merchant ships at sea. After the sinking of the Titanic, congress passed the Radio Act of 1910 which required ships at sea to have radios on board, but no rules upon the amateurs. The QRM continued to be a problem for the Navy.

**“Here come the regulators”**

(Continued next month)

Byron, WN4R, is an original member of The Villages Amateur Radio Club (TVARC) located in Central Florida.

## Silver Springs Radio Club Hamfest

### December 5th

CARL R. BERRY, KC5CMX  
2015 SSRC Hamfest Chairman

Silver Springs Radio Club’s hamfest is December 5<sup>th</sup> at the FL. National Guard Armory. It’s our first large hamfest in recent memory, or the last 10 + years. The building itself is over 5,000 sf of *climate controlled* space. We have several large vendors coming and there is still plenty of room inside. Outside, the Marion County Sheriff’s Office will have their Mobile Command Center, KK4AEG, on display. There are 45+ tailgate stalls available including stalls set aside for those selling towers from their trailers. Plenty of parking across the street from the armory.

Food and beverages will be available and there will also be two VE test sessions, one at 10:00 and one at 2:00. Due to space limitations, it is requested that you pre-register for the test.

More information about the event can be found at <http://k4gso.us/hamfest>. There is a flyer, floorplan and signup forms, directions and more on the website.

Event times: Indoor Vendor setup Friday 8:00-4:00 (everyone out by 4:15). Vendor setup Saturday from 6:30-7:45 **ONLY**. All inside vendors need to park across

## SKYWARN™ Recognition Day December 5<sup>th</sup>

Steve Ewald, WV1X  
Supervisor, Field Organization Team



The 17<sup>th</sup> annual SKYWARN Recognition Day (SRD) special event will take place Saturday, December 5, 2015, from 0000 UTC to 2400 UTC. SKYWARN Recognition Day, co-sponsored by the American Radio Relay League and the National Weather Service, pays tribute to Amateur Radio operators for the vital public service they perform. During the 24-hour event, Amateur Radio operators visit their local National Weather Service (NWS) office and work as a team to contact other hams across the world. This event is also aimed at strengthening the bond between Amateur Radio operators and local NWS offices.

The volunteer SKYWARN program comprises nearly 290,000 trained severe weather spotters — many of them radio amateurs — who identify severe storms and provide NWS forecasters with reports of local weather conditions during severe weather events. SKYWARN Recognition Day is not a contest. The object is for stations to exchange some basic information with as many NWS stations as possible on 80 meters through 70 centimeters (excluding 1.25 meters). Repeater contacts are permitted. Stations exchange call signs, signal reports, locations, and a one or two-word description of the weather at their respective locations.

The National Weather Service provides event information on this Web site: <http://hamradio.noaa.gov>.



the street. **(ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING ON THE GRASS IN OR AROUND ARMORY PROPERTY— ARMORY RULES)** Doors open Saturday at 8:00 and close at 4:00, everyone out by 5:00.

There will be hourly door prizes (or more often), but you must be present to win — exception: Grand Prize.

You may call the hamfest chairman, Carl Berry, KC5CMX, at 352.233.8663 or email at [KC5CMX@GMAIL.COM](mailto:KC5CMX@GMAIL.COM).

## CQWW DX SSB CONTEST OPERATION FROM MONTSERRAT - 2015

By George Briggs, K2DM / VP2MDG

The Villages Amateur Radio Club (TVARC)

Montserrat – the Emerald Isle of the Caribbean. This small British overseas territory was once a favored destination of many travelers ranging from famous rock and roll bands to not-so-famous amateur radio operators. Sir George Martin's AIR Studios Montserrat, which opened in 1979, played host to such artists as Dire Straits, The Police, Sir Paul McCartney, The Rolling Stones and Eric Clapton.



Tragically, Montserrat was devastated in 1989 by Hurricane Hugo, which destroyed 90% of the island's structures, including the homes of nearly all of its 12,000 residents. AIR Studios was ruined and closed its doors forever, but with aid from the UK, Montserrat rebuilt and had returned to near normalcy when disaster struck. After a lengthy period of dormancy the Soufriere Hills volcano became active again in 1995. Significant eruptions, accompanied by massive pyroclastic flows, occurred in the months of June, August, September and December of 1997, killing 19 people and burying both the airport and the entire capital city of Plymouth.

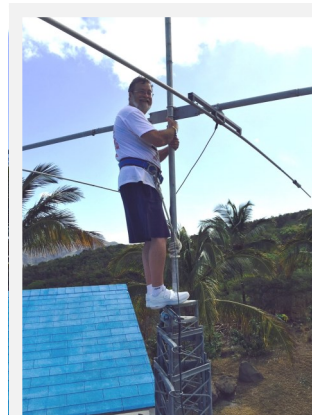
With Plymouth destroyed and the entire southern part of the island declared an exclusion zone, a significant portion of the residents were displaced. By 1998, 3,500 had relocated to the UK and 3,000 had moved to neighboring countries. Only about 3,500 residents remained on Montserrat. Needless to say, tourism suffered significantly, and ham radio took a back seat to survival and rebuilding among the remaining VP2Ms.

Montserrat is coming back, but it is unlikely that it will ever be the same. A new airport has been built in the northern part of the island, but it has a very short runway that can only accommodate very small aircraft. There is also a ferry between Antigua and Montserrat, but it does not run every day. And, although Montserrat is a beautiful island with extremely friendly people, it is not for everyone. If you like to dive or go on nature hikes or operate ham radio, Montserrat is great. If you like to sit in the sun and look out over the Carib-

bean to Nevis in the distance, this is the place. But if you are looking for a luxury hotel with a casino, a golf course, a manicured beach and a pool with a swim-up bar, you will not find it here. Montserrat's only golf course (nine holes) is under many feet of volcanic ash. And that pesky volcano, although quiet over the last few years, remains a threat.

My experience with Montserrat began in 2004. Brother Peter (K3ZM) and I operated the ARRL CW DX contest from a hotel on Antigua. After that contest we took a ferry-ride day trip to tour Montserrat. Peter decided that we HAD to go back to operate CQWW CW in November, so we did. What a blast we had, with very high rates on all bands. After all, we were the first serious operation from Montserrat in years. We stayed in Providence Estate, which is where Paul McCartney stayed while he was recording at AIR Studios. While we were there, we also discovered the Gingerbread Hill guest house, which is a great contest location and which is run by a very ham-friendly couple.

The 2015 CQWW DX SSB contest would be my tenth contest operation from Montserrat. Some of those previous operations had been as a single-op, but most were as a multi-single entry. This time I would be alone, so I had to do all the setting up, operating and taking down myself. Over the years I had shipped down a lot of equipment to Montserrat, including two triband yagis, a two-element shorty forty yagi, dipoles, coax, switches, keyers, a transceiver and a whole bunch of other stuff. But the centerpiece of the equipment is a 55-foot, heavy duty, motorized crank-up tower. I shipped it down from New Jersey a few years ago, and my host attached it to the rear of the guest house at Gingerbread Hill. The beauty of the installation is that, when cranked down, the top of the tower extends about four feet above the flat roof-top sundeck of the guest house. I can stand on the deck and comfortably mount yagis and dipoles on the tower.





## Montserrat (Continued)

Murphy struck two weeks before I even left The Villages for Montserrat. A group that was operating from Gingerbread Hill reported that the rotator was not working AND that the tower would not crank all the way down. The rusty old motor had apparently given up the ghost. I scurried around trying to get a replacement motor, but it arrived at my house after I had begun my journey.

The airport van picked me up at 3:45 AM Wednesday for the drive to Orlando. Orlando to Miami; Miami to Antigua; and Antigua to Montserrat – finally arriving at 5:30 PM. My host picked me up, took me to the grocery store for provisions, and deposited me in the guest house. I had the coffee maker going before dawn the next morning as I attacked the ‘broken’ rotator. As I had expected, the problem was in the cabling. A Jones plug that I had installed a while back to allow for quickly disconnecting the cable from the rotator had gotten smashed. I installed a Euro connector in place of the Jones plug and patted myself on the back for solving that problem so quickly.

Just for grins I tried to crank up the tower, but, as reported to me by the previous group, the motor hummed but did not turn. So I revised my plans. No 40M yagi. Use the smaller CL-33 yagi instead of the TH6 because I could push the CL-33 up a few feet higher on the mast. Rig up some masts for dipoles on 40M,

80M and 160M. By the end of the day I had everything up, tuned and pruned, and, although the CL-33 was only about 30 feet above the ground, it was easily turned by the rotator.



Friday morning I made the mistake of more-closely inspecting the tower motor. Although the wiring junction box was very rusty, the wiring inside was clean and neat, so I moved on to the motor-start capacitor. I had to force open its compartment due to rust, and I discovered it was full of rust flakes. I blew out all the rust and tried the motor again. Still no joy. As a last resort I reseated the two wires attached to the capacitor. Bingo! So now what do I do? It was too late to install the 40M yagi, but I relocated two of the dipoles to the tower and cranked that sucker up. Of course that required me to retune those dipoles as the reconfiguration caused a significant change in resonant fre-

quency. Up and down the stairs, back and forth to the ends of the wires, but finally all of the antennas were ready to go. Phew! I was pooped. After a late lunch it was time for a nap before the start of the contest.

I started the contest on 40M. The dipole worked pretty well, and I put a lot of 3-point Europeans in the log. Hams on Montserrat are allowed to transmit below 7.100 MHz, so I was able to avoid the bedlam higher in the band. I hit 20M for an hour at 0200Z and discovered that Murphy had visited me again. I tried to



swing the CL-33 from eastern Europe to the States, but it would not turn. I tried ‘bumping’ it clockwise for a moment, then turning it

counterclockwise, but all that did was bring the antenna further east of Europe. Oh well, nothing I could do about it now. Overnight I cycled through 40M, 80M and 160M until 0500Z when I took my first sleep period. Up and at ‘em again for the 0900Z hour to put some 80M contacts into the log, then it was off and running on 20M, 15M and 10M. N1MM says that I worked 223 stations on 15M during the 2000Z hour, despite the beam being pointed in the wrong direction.

After all the excitement of the daytime runs, with 10M being wide open to Europe, it was back to the nighttime grind. I took my programmed nap a bit earlier, woke up for an hour to put some 160M contacts into the log, then got up in earnest a bit later. From there it was a struggle. I was very tired, I had difficulty getting a run going on any of the high bands, and my motivation was flagging. Then K3ZM worked me and reminded me why I was down here. So I punched through the haze and finally got some decent runs going on 10M. I even worked fellow Villager K2PS who was single-band 10M. As contacts really became scarce on the high bands I QSY’d to 40M for the last hour and put 31 final QSOs into the log including a 9K2 and a 9M4.

I finished the contest with 4,001 contacts (net of dupes), 118 zones and 373 countries. I was told by friends in the States that my signal on the high bands was down over past years. Still, I had a boatload of

Montserrat (Continued)

fun. Some of the highlights of the contest included: working many old friends from various clubs that I have belonged to; having close friends and fellow Villagers NP2B, NP2C, N4FP and WB2VYK (our QST NFL editor!) call me Saturday afternoon; working both of my brothers (K3ZM and VY2ZM) on a number of bands; working my nephew (KK6ZM) on 80M; and working some incredible DX. In one 35-minute stretch on 20M I worked VK, ZL, HS, 9M, 5W, JA and YB.

Monday was take-down day. I left the CL-33 on the tower for a group that would be arriving in a few days, but I took down the three dipoles and stowed them, coiled up all the coax and stowed it and dismantled the station. I repaired the rotator AGAIN. One wire had

come loose from the Euro connector, so I gave up on quick disconnects and hard-wired the cable. Happily, the tower motor kept working, so I was able to crank the tower back down. Monday evening I checked into The Villages Amateur Radio Club ragchew net via Echo-link and chatted with the folks back home. What a hoot!

As usual I would like to thank David and Clover Lea, the proprietors of Gingerbread Hill, for their hospitality. If you ever want to be on the other side of the pileup, Gingerbread Hill is a great place to go. And almost all of the equipment stored down there is available for visiting hams to use.



## Okaloosa County ARES Activated

Stephen Strom, N4GXX

ARES EC Okaloosa County, Florida

At the request of the Okaloosa County EOC on 18 November 2015 at 1142 hours local, I activated the ARES net. We ran this net until 1512 hours local when the EOC canceled it.

Before we were activated there were sightings of water spouts and damage reports from straight line wind damage.

No severe weather was ever spotted during out time. No severe weather damage was reported after we activated.

Those that came out to help were:

**KI4MEU Bob Murphy** at Henderson State Park

**W4RH Frank Butler** roamer

**KK4VAX Daniel Horne** relieving Bob so he could return to work

**NS4H Maurice "Mo" Hodgson** Beasley Park then Hubert Field area

**KK4MCV Eric Strom** Okaloosa/Walton county line

**N4GXX Stephen Strom** Beasley Park relieving Mo

MEDIA HIT : <http://www.weartv.com/news/features/top-stories/stories/amateur-radio-operators-dedicated-keeping-people-safe-during-severe-weather-62296.shtml#.Vk5CBL-YSKE>

## Carole Perry, WB2MGP, to Host Youth Forum at HamCation

Dave Jordan, AA4KN

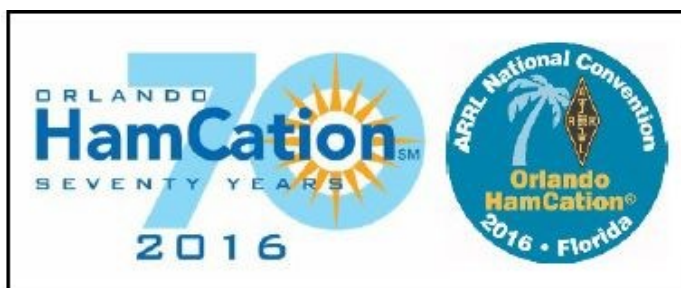
AMSAT Area Coordinator for Central/North Florida

We are all getting ready for the upcoming HamCation here in Orlando. One of our forum presenters this year will be **Carole Perry, WB2MGP**, who is well known for the Youth Forum that she hosts at the Dayton Hamvention each year.

Carole is looking for students that are ham operators and have an exceptional story to share about their experience in the hobby.

Perhaps you know a young ham who has an interesting story to tell about acquiring his/her license. Or a student who has coupled their ham hobby with a related school science project, etc. We are hoping to find some inspirational kids to inspire other kids to join the hobby.

If you have someone to recommend, please contact me at: [aa4kn@amsat.org](mailto:aa4kn@amsat.org).





## It's Not Fun Anymore By Stan Zawrotny, K4SBZ

As printed in The Printed Circuit – Newsletter of the Tallahassee Amateur Radio Society, Editor Mike Maynard, K4ICY

How many hams have you met that have the same interests today as when they started out? For instance, some of you will remember that I was once the TARS newsletter editor before I turned it over to our current editor, who has made it such a success. I was involved in emcomm for a while and held a North Florida section level position. I have been active in all of the bicycle races and have chaired the Tallahassee Marathon before turning it over to someone new this past year. I was even TARS president for a year! My interests have ranged from operating on the repeaters and with D\*Star a few years ago to PSK31 to RTTY to DX and contesting, while dabbling with a variety of other things along the way. My interest in (and enjoyment of) all these activities ebbs and flows over time. But I haven't gotten bored because I've kept moving!



Unfortunately, too many hams start out with an interest in one area and never explore all of the many other exciting corners of our hobby. Many hams never go beyond the occasional use of their HTs. There are many hams that I have met over the years and that I have helped receive their licenses that I know still live here in town, but I don't see them at club meetings, Field Days or on the air. Will they renew their licenses at the end of their ten years? Probably not. They have just lost interest. Could this sad result be avoided by the enthusiastic guidance of an "Elmer?"

On the other hand, sometimes we lose someone due to "burnout." They focus so intently on the competitive chase of contesting or DXing or whatever that eventually it wears them down and they quit. For them, it wasn't fun anymore. This happens in all sorts of activities, of course; at work, in one's church or other social groups, our volunteer groups, and even within groups of friends. What was once a rewarding or relaxing activity now holds one captive until escape is the only recourse. This is particularly sad in ham radio because the hobby has so many different facets. If one wearies of building equipment, countless operating events exist. Even just a slight change can be enough. If you are burning out on DXing or contesting then try working QRP for a different perspective on it.

Or maybe you just need a short break. If running a club or EmComm team is getting old, take a little time off. What would happen if you took a break? Would the world come to an end? I once read, "If you think you're indispensable, put your hand in a bucket of water then pull it out. If there's a hole left behind where your hand was, then you're indispensable." I tried it. I'm not. And while you are "on vacation" from the old, what better time to try something new, even if it's just for a short time? Maybe you will like it.



### ***When was the last time you tried something new?***

Ham radio is a huge world with many exciting things that many of us haven't even heard of. [Here's just a sample of a few aspects you might look in to: DXing, Contesting, Sweepstakes, QRP (Low-Power), QRO (Legal-Limit), Electronics, Kit Building, Homebrewing and Modding, New Digital Modes including the increasing use of Software Defined Radios, Microprocessors and Microcomputers, Original Digital Modes including CW, RTTY, Hellscriber, SSTV, FSK, Packet, PSK31 and etc... Satellites, Earth-Moon-Earth and JT65 are challenging, there's Foxhunting and EmComm preparation, and you can try Trail Operating or Remote Operating (using an Apply Watch) ...the list goes on and on!] Don't be bored. Don't burn out. Try something different. Expand your horizons. Have fun!

Stan Zawrotny, K4SBZ [K4SBZ.Stan@Gmail.com](mailto:K4SBZ.Stan@Gmail.com)

## Mt. Dora Bicycle Festival

Strait Hollis, KT4YA

Section Emergency Coordinator



I would like to comment on an experience I had this weekend. Lake County is on the central Florida ridge and has lots of hills especially when compared to the ultra-flat coastal areas along the Atlantic. Sugar Loaf Mountain at 312 ft is

the highest point on the Florida peninsula and is a Mecca for bicyclists throughout the state. Lake County ARES has supported the Mt Dora Bicycle Festival for over 25 years, and, because it is a three day event, it is always a challenge for us to provide volunteers for communications and course safety for the 1400 riders that participate.

On Sunday I, along with other members of Lake County ARES, had the opportunity to work with Orange County ARES to support the one day 2500 rider Horrible Hundred bicycling event that had routes of 35, 70 & 100 miles all within Lake County. The event organizers, the Florida Freewheelers, are the largest bicycling club in Central Florida and have members from all over the region but primarily the Orlando Metropolitan area. Because of working with OCARES on a number of other events in Orange County, they approached John Knott, N4JTK, EC-OCARES seeking communications/course safety support for the first time this year even though the event is 36 years

old. Realizing the size and scope of the event John contacted Al Richter EC-LCARES requesting volunteers for the event.

OCARES did all the preliminary work including developing the position assignments and communications plan using two UHF repeaters and APRS. As the plan began to come together arrangements were made to use UHF repeaters belonging to LCARES members. After OCARES staff visited the event headquarters they realized the building environment could not serve as the communications center. John asked if the LCARES communications trailer could be used for the event, and the Lake group readily agreed to its use and made all arrangements to have the trailer transported and deployed. The twenty two volunteers, of which about one-third were from LCARES, worked well together on the day-long event. Since many of the volunteers were working until 6:00PM yesterday a final recap/debriefing has not been held.

It was an interesting weekend for me to serve under the direction of another county's EC as I have been the communications lead for most of the public service events in Lake County over the past several years. I have been writing you recently about the importance of being in touch with your neighboring counties' ECs, but the actuality of working on a joint operation is much better than just radio, phone and email communication. Give it a try if the opportunity ever comes up. Cooperation and coordination are necessary in such endeavors, but, as always. Flexibility is Essential.



## Cottonmouth 100

Daisy Crepeau, KT4KW – Assistant Emergency Coordinator, Santa Rosa County

**Summary:** On Saturday and Sunday November 14 and 15, 2015 the West Panhandle District ARES groups participated in an Ultra 100-mile endurance run by providing radio support at each of 6 aid stations and the start/finish line. This race took place in parts of 2 counties (Santa Rosa and Okaloosa) in a forest that encompasses almost 200,000 acres.

- 16 Amateur Radio Operators and stations
- 8 Escambia County ARES (includes 2 Asst. EC's) and 1 non-ARES member
- Okaloosa County ARES

- 6 Santa Rosa County ARES (includes EC and Asst. EC)
- 1 West Panhandle DEC

To read the complete After Action Report, please go to [http://arrrl-nfl.org/?page\\_id=1955](http://arrrl-nfl.org/?page_id=1955)

**Hollis Strait, KT4YA, Section Emergency Coordinator, comments:**

*I just read the After Action Report for the Cottonmouth 100 event. Congratulations to all who helped with the event and particularly to Daisy and Joe who developed a very comprehensive After Action Report; a vital function in any Public Service Activity.*



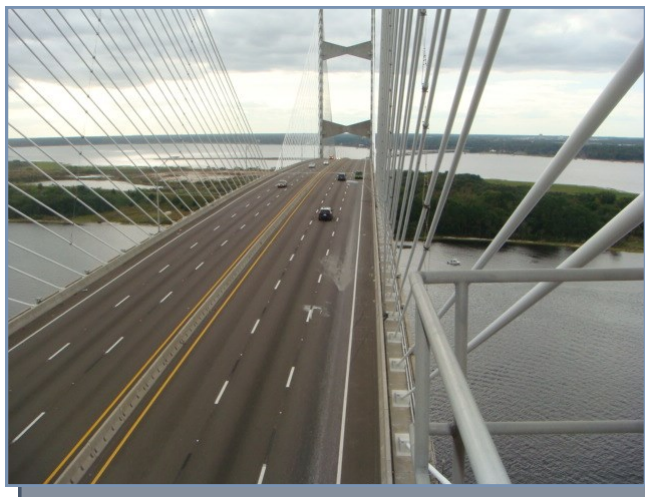
## W4IZ DAMES POINT EXPEDITION

By Billy Williams, N4UF

On Sunday November 15th, members of the North Florida Amateur Radio Society (NOFARS) scaled the Dames Point Bridge on I-295 in Jacksonville. NOFARS operates the W4IZ 146.7 and 444.4 MHz repeater system. It includes a VHF remote receiver and UHF link on the bridge to the main W4IZ site downtown. Equipment is housed in a concrete enclosure that spans above the six-lane roadway.

The crew installed new transceivers for both the W4IZ VHF repeater and the Jacksonville RANGE 146.76 repeater. They gathered near the northern end of the bridge at 9AM and completed work around 2PM. The Jacksonville Sheriffs Office provided an escort to the top of the bridge and allowed equipment to be unloaded safely from the right lane of the busy highway. From a catwalk, the crew hoisted gear by rope up to the enclosure. The remote receiver expands W4IZ's coverage, especially north and east of town.

(Photos by Bob Simmons, KS4CA, below)



Dames Point Bridge



Dames Point Bridge—Upper View



Jacksonville RANGE 146.76 repeater



Dames Point Expedition Work Party



## Upcoming Hamfests

- December 5 ..... Low Dough Hamfest, Silver Springs ARC, Ocala, FL <http://k4gso.us/Hamfest>
- December 11 ..... West Central Florida Section Convention (Tampa Bay Hamfest) <http://www.tampabayhamfest.org>
- January 9, 2016 – TARCfest, Tampa, FL <http://www.hamclub.org> **New!**
- January 15, 2016 – Southern Florida Section Convention, Fort Myers, FL <http://swflhamfest.info>
- January 23, 2016 – DeSoto County Hamfest, Arcadia, FL <http://desotoarc.org> **New!**
- February 12, 2016 – ARRL National Convention (Orlando HamCation), Orlando, FL <http://hamcation.com>
- February 20, 2016 – Highlands County Hamfest, Sebring, FL <http://www.highlandssamateurradio.com> **New!**
- February 27, 2016 – 2nd Annual West Central Florida Section Technical Conference <http://www.arrlwcf.org>



## FCC Testing Information

### Amateur Electronic Supply

- Monthly on the second Saturday
- 9:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)
- 621 Commonwealth Av, Orlando, FL 32806
- Click: [map](#)
- For more information and registration, contact AES at [orlando@aesham.com](mailto:orlando@aesham.com), 407-894-3238

### 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. The next session is Thursday, November 5, 2015 7PM.
- 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.

## Section Nets.....

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

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
Defuniak Springs Walton County ARC Net	147.285 (+), PL 100Hz	Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 1930
Florida Hurricane Net,	D-Star REF037C	Monday, 2100
Fort Walton Beach – Playground ARC Net	146.790, (-), PL 100Hz	Sunday, 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
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	147.120, (+), PL 100Hz	Monday, 2030
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 Chapter 217 The Villages	443.150, PL 103.5 Echolink K4LFK-R	Friday, 1000
QFN CW Traffic Net	3547 Winter (7105 Summer)	Daily, 1900

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

Santa Rosa County Skywarn Net	146.700, K4SRC Repeater	Monday, 20:00
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 of 103.5 147.450 Simplex	Daily, 19:15 First Monday, 19:15
Suwannee ARES/Emergency Prep Net	145.270 PL 123 145/410 PL 123 FSQ— 3.594 MHz	Thursday, 2030
The Villages Amateur Radio Club (TVARC)	443.225, PL 103.5	Monday, 19:00
Traders Net	3.933	Sunday, 08:00
Valparaiso Twin Cities Amateur Radio	146.73, (-), no PL tone	Sunday, 20:30
Walton County ARES Net	147.375 (+), PL 100Hz	Wednesday, 19:00

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W4HKG Robert A. Mitchell

**Affiliated Club Coordinator**

WA4B Stephen W. Barber

**Section Traffic Manager**

N9MN Don A. Duckett

**Official Observer Coordinator**

AA4W Rick A. Lloyd



# QST NFL



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