



Alachua County AFARC / ARES Completes Raucous Full Scale Exercise

by Gordon Gibby KX4Z

(Gainesville, FL) It was **FAST**, it was **LOUD**, we were **LOST** and ***in danger of being EATEN*** – that was how the largest full scale exercise ever done by Alachua County ARES/NFARC came off on March 30th, written by first-time new exercise-designers Leland Gallup JD AA3YB and Susan Halbert PhD KG4VWI. *I have never been so completely overwhelmed before, in an exercise....nor learned so much about how to pay attention to the GOAL!*

Twenty or more people (I lost count) including amateur radio operators, firefighters / MARC crew, Santa Fe College students and “air-operations” DRONE crew all came together after a briefing at 0815 on the appointed Saturday. We had no idea what we were in for!

Split into deployed teams, COMM1 headed for the site of the zoo-break (due to loss of power and electromagnetic locks, according to the fanciful scenario); COMM2 started setting up antennas at the County Shelter for those frightened by the **loose tigers** (!) and the EOC team went to the EOC – where they struggled to get the new antenna up and untangled... for quite a while.

Meanwhile the Air Operations (actually monitoring the local Helicopter CTAF freq for safety) got underway and the Mutual Assistance Radio Communications #3 unit had their **100-foot tower** and public safety repeaters fully deployed – **and they didn't work!** Communications to the fire trucks on site in competition with the deployed amateurs *just didn't work* over the rolling hills of Gainesville, Florida – a complete surprise to Lt. Kevin Rulapaugh ACFR (KE4NVI).

That wasn't to be his last problem – and COMM1 was struggling with HF transmitter issues even though their antennas for HF and VHF were up in only 20 minutes. COMM2 was having massive problems getting their digital working, but quickly had VHF voice going – and

the EOC was really having problems with everything except VHF (which thankfully we fixed a few months ago). The beleaguered volunteers at the EOC were literally reading the HF transmitter manual in a desperate attempt to get it to transmit—and doing the best they could!

Ah, the benefits of EXERCISES! Our group had intentionally put new people in command spots everywhere possible, and they were getting a baptism by fire! A chance for issue recognition and growth!

Badly frustrated, Lt. Rulapaugh headed for the EOC and brought up a local public service repeater to get better coverage – only to discover that it was doubling with an unexpected already extant repeater on the same frequency! He brought up a THIRD public service system and finally had a success, then worked backwards to fix the 2nd set of repeaters. *Good thing this was only an EXERCISE!!*

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Editor's Note: On March 9th my call sign changed to **N4GL**. I will now be using n4gl.marty@gmail.com as my email address. I look forward to your input!

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*Email your QST NFL input to
n4gl.marty@gmail.com
Marty Brown, N4GL, Editor*

Exercise (Continued)

Meanwhile, the actors on the Family Radio Service radios just blithered on and on about the gunshots, the escaped animals, and dozens of other catastrophes in progress – sailing completely over the head of Incident Commander / COMM 1 as we allowed ourselves to get **tunnel vision** working on an HF solution.....big mistake!

That firefighter with his little front-pocket notebook just *kept coming over* every 30 minutes giving us thoroughly professional briefings, one right after another, like this was nothing at all out of the ordinary ... as I-75 was shut down by a massive tanker fire.....and the hams struggled with how to do formal message traffic that we hadn't practiced nearly enough!

Wow! Did we ever pick up some issues to be solved!

The hotwash lunch was full of rapid-fire excited conversations over burritos and enchiladas as participants recounted the glories and the ignominies we had all experienced for the previous three action-packed hours. One thing we all learned: keep your eyes on the highest priorities.... One person cannot handle three frequencies! The After Action Report is in progress, becoming conformed to HSEEP format and yet another full-scale exercise is in the books for Alachua County Hams.

We actually are considering re-doing it as an "Exercise -Light" at 2/3 speed later this summer after we have worked on a few...ahem..."issues". What a day!

ICS-201: https://qsl.net/nf4rc/2019/MARCHEXERCISE/ICS_201_SET_30_Mar_2019_v_28_March_2019_With_Org_Chart_ODF_Text_Doc.pdf

ICS-205: <https://qsl.net/nf4rc/2019/MARCHEXERCISE/ICS-205AVIATION.pdf>

The entire initial briefing crowd would not fit in one photo. Leland Gallup AA3YB far left as everyone listens to Susan Halbert KG4VWI off camera to the right.



COMM1 / Incident Command upper left with Trailer & Canopy – Fire Truck Comms lower Right; view from the Drone.



Completely overwhelmed COMM1



The AIR OPERATIONS wing, busy hunting for that TIGER (which ate one of the deer!). L to R: Steve Griffis operating drone (non-ham); Jim Carr KC4MHH, Susan Halbert KG4VWI, Leland Gallup AA3YB



Northern Florida ARES Conference

Karl Martin KG4HBN, ARES Amateur Radio Emergency Service
Section Emergency Coordinator, North Florida Section



Northern Florida *Emergency Coordinators & *Assistant Emergency Coordinators.
You are invited to the Northern Florida ARES Conference.

May 27th at 9 AM
American Red Cross
Capital Area Office
1115 Easterwood Drive. Tallahassee, FL 32311
Local Repeater 147.03 PI 94.8

[Click here for link to
this address.](#)



This is the perfect time to meet the people you will work with before, during and after a disaster. Exchange ideas and cover strategies you use in your area.

We will be discussing all the changes happening in the section, tri-section and at the State level. We will also cover additional topics of interest to ARES Members.

The Tri-section SEC's NFL Karl Martin KG4HBN, WCF Ben Henley KI4IGX and SFL John Wells W4CMH will be there to answer any questions.

There will be food and drink served free of charge for lunch.

*The conference is primarily for EC's and AEC's because we have limited space. If you would like to attend, please visit the link to be placed on a waiting list.

<https://tiny.cc/2019nflcon>
RSVP by 5/24/19

Gainesville March For Babies Radio Support Big Success

by Gordon Gibby KX4Z

(Gainesville, FL) Public service volunteer radio communications were ably provided for the Gainesville March For Babies fundraising walk/run, March of Dimes campaign against birth defects on Saturday April 13 2019.

Communications were sponsored by the **Gainesville Amateur Radio Society**, with Vann Chesney AC4QS acting as point person, aided by a great team of 15+ volunteers, including a Drone Air Wing provided by Jim Carr KC4MHH (see: <http://drive.google.com> username is: inspire@fireline.org password is: !Movies2019).

“Firsts” for this event included the first comprehensive Incident Command System documentation, including an ICS-201, 205, 205A, and 206 (Medical Plan), completed by Vann. (See, for example: https://qsl.net/nf4rc/2019/MarchForBabies_ICS201.pdf) The amateur radio support was extremely well organized, all in place before daybreak, well before race opening, and one might even suggest the march organizers might wish to take up the ICS system to organize ice / water delivery. Although pre-event testing had identified clear spots with great signals from local K4GNV (146.82 (-) 123) repeater, both the bicycle rover and “tail-end” reporter hit dead spots caused by local multi-story buildings along the winding, compact route. A first-ever test of a low-power itinerant UHF repeater demonstrated good coverage into the building areas, suggesting that simplex or local itinerant repeater might be options for next year, particularly after the 5-story parking lot becomes available.

There was one “incident” during the march where a supporting person experienced a medical event at a registration table; help was quickly obtained.



At the Net Control Station – (L to R) Pete Winters W4GHP; Larry Rovak WB2SVB; Deb Boal KI4CVS, Shannon Boal K4GLM, Vann Chesney AC4QS



A little less exciting than the medical event at registration point, but Station 3 reported the need for more restroom facilities....

Spring Hill Amateur Radio Club (SHARC) – KF4IXU

Michael Darnell, kd7toz@aol.com

WELCOME NEW SHARC MEMBER

Tim Burns, KN4TOV

Field Day 2019

SHARC will be operating from the Sand Hills Scout Reservation this year, using callsign **N4W**. Project Leader Lenny Sechrist, WS8O plans to have three operating locations set-up using the Club Communication Trailer, WS8O's Communication Trailer, and NZ2W's RV.

SK Scholarship Award

SHARC will present a scholarship to a financially deserving graduating senior from Nature Coast Technical High School in a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) program. The student must be in a postsecondary STEM education program.

3FPO

3FPO will be held on May 24th, 9:30 a.m. at [Bayport Park](#), near the old fishing pier. All are welcome to join us operating or to have a casual conversation. Operating activities are on all bands and all modes. 3FPO gives SHARC members the opportunity to operate in a "field" setting.

SHARC Nets

Monday Night Rag Chew, 7:30 p.m., hosted by Tim Fida, WBOYSX, is held on SHARC's open 70 cm open repeater (443.800 + no tones). All are invited to join the conversation.

NEW Monday Night CW QRS Net, 8:00 p.m. starting May 6th, on 40m (7.045MHz). This is a scripted net, sending & receiving at 10 WPM. The script is available for download from the [SHARC](#) website. Net host will be Joe Pfeuffer, KW1K.

Tuesday Night SHARC Nets, utilizing SHARCS 2m open repeater (146.805 – no tones) starts at 6:30 p.m. with the **SSTV Net**. At 7:15 p.m., is the **SHARC SKYWARN Net**, hosted by Wally Melching, K4DTR. At 7:30 p.m. is the **SHARC 2 Meter Net**. Each week features a different Net Control Officer.

Monday Night CW QRS Net

SHARC will begin its Monday evening QRS (Slow Speed - 10 WPM) CW Net on May 6th. You must pre-register to be included in the roll call. Register by sending an email to Doug Borko, NZ2W at nz2w@floridasailor.com.

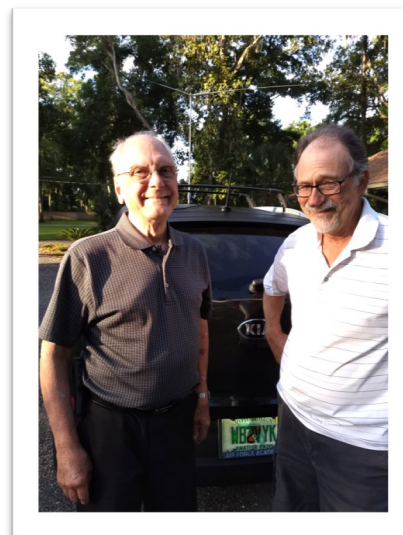
The Net is being designed to help people new to CW, or coming back to CW, to hone their skills both for listening and sending code. After a few weeks the format of the net will be expanded to be more free flowing with participants asked to send unscripted text.

The script is available for download on the SHARC [website](#).

Monthly Meeting

The next SHARC Monthly Meeting/Club Project Night is May 16th, 7:00 p.m. at the VFW Hall, 14736 Edward R. Noll Dr, Spring Hill. Club Project Night starts at 6:00 p.m., led by Bernie Bathauer, WB9NDG and Wayne Boyd, KD4ERG.

Florida QSO Party, Going Mobile!



Wayne Brown, N4FP, and Pete Stafford, K2PS, went mobile in the 2019 FQP. They reported approximately 1960 contacts in the 2-day event. They operated multi-single, CW only, low power, and they covered 33 counties.

Pete and Wayne are both members of The Villages Amateur Radio Club (TVARC).

Alachua County Amateur Volunteers Take MARC Unit Training

By Gordon Gibby KX4Z

(Gainesville, FL) Two Alachua County amateur radio emergency comms volunteers, Shannon Boal K4GLM and Gordon Gibby KX4Z, took three days of training to learn how to operate the enormous 100-foot telescoping trailered tower and duplexer systems of one of the States Mutual Assistance Radio Communications units. The course was taught by Lt. Kevin Rulapaugh of Alachua County Fire Rescue, who commanded MARC unit #3 deployed to the Panhandle during the response to Hurricane Michael. Another MARC unit tower and crew, and a search and rescue unit from Ocala also participated in the training.

The first day was air-conditioned classroom education about the capabilities of the radios and systems cached with the MARC unit. The cache includes multiple types of radios and the numbers are mind-boggling: up to 100 extremely high quality Motorola hand-talkies with batteries for many days are cached – and each radio is in the range of \$5,000. That makes the radio cache alone around ½ million dollars. No wonder Lt. Rulapaugh drove it back to safe storage at the conclusion of each day of training!

Days 2 and 3 were held at San Felasco hammock in a large grassy field with a nearby covered teaching area. Multiple systems were covered on Day 2:

- unsuccessful attempt to bring up the high speed automated satellite dish internet access system (mechano-electronic failure of the control system)
- modestly successful tries of portable satellite telephone systems (managed to call regular cell phones but could not call each other)
- attaching a broad array of antennas to the top and sides of the MARC tower
- attaching galvanized steel guy cables
- lifting the tower to vertical using a hand-winch
- extending the tower using an electrical winch
- placing guy-wire points
- extending tower to full height
- taking the entire thing down and replacing all the components



Continued on Page 6, MARC

Alachua County MARC Unit (Continued)

On Day 3, the team was given a “final exam” that involved a deployment scenario requiring deployment of antennas, duplexers, and the tower to maximum non-guyed height (the guy wires easily add another hour to the effort) and then responding properly to “injects” that required creation of a theater-wide ICS-205, repeater adjustments, deployments of radio cache, and the use of a fascinating radio-patch-panel system, the



ACU-M. That system can effectively connect two or more repeater systems using connections to hand-held radios tuned to the various repeaters. In effect, it is a computerized, multi-channel, bi-directional (half-duplex) set of Signalinks with auto-audio level, and voice operated squelch in both directions. Ham radio operators could easily make a 2-channel version using two Signalinks.



It was a grueling set of tasks for two older hams not in nearly as good shape as the younger firefighters with whom they worked, but it was a fantastic interoperability learning experience! And guess what – the Florida Baptist Disaster Relief group has a nearly identical tower for disaster communications that needs refurbishment & volunteers!

QCWA Scholarship Funds Available!

Rhyne Killian, KA1CX President

Ocala Chapter 62 based in Ocala, FL held their bi-monthly meeting at the China Lee Buffet restaurant on Thursday April 25. Eight people were in attendance including a visit by Joe Ayala, K4JGA who is one of the directors of the QCWA. Joe's spoke to the group about the QCWA Scholarship Fund. His mission is to spread the word that there is money available for Amateurs wanting to attend college. Joe pointed out that applications for scholarships are down, and money is available. Checkout the link below for more information.

<http://www.qcwa.org/scholarship-program.htm>



Pictured are Ned Davis, WB4BKO, Joe Ayala, K4JGA, XYL of WB4BKO, Wayne Brown, N4FP, Marty Brown, N4GL and Dick Schauer, WBDYV.

12 Year Old Girl Gets Ham Radio License in Columbia County

Jon Lash, KM4EON

A twelve year old is the youngest person to take and pass the Technician Class amateur radio exam through Columbia Amateur Radio Society. Eric Black-KD4FLM, along with his wife, Miriam, took their daughter Camila for testing. They met Tuesday with three CARS members (Volunteer Examiners) who are trained to administer the FCC license exam. The exam consists of 35 questions from a pool of 423. The questions cover federal regulations, electronics and operating procedures. Though the FCC does not compile age data, they said a 12 year old girl is one of the youngest. The cost of the exam is \$15 and the license is valid for 10 years.



In front are Miriam, Camila and Eric. The three examiners are, left to right: Colin Boutwell-WA5RKR, Richard Heston-KE4BQI and Ron Austin-KK4HGY. Photo by Mary Austin-KM4SYS



ARRL EC-001 COURSE OFFERED

by Gordon Gibby KX4Z

In the revamping of the ARES® program by the ARRL, specific training coursework was required for different “levels” within the organization of this service program. (See: [http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Public Service/ARES/ARES Plan - rev 01-30 -19.pdf](http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Public%20Service/ARES/ARES%20Plan%20-%20rev%2001-30-19.pdf)) Immediately a problem was recognized locally – the available EC 001 mentored online courses were jam-packed, with none available to many for the remainder of the year.

We’ve solved this somewhat now, and a new EC-001 course will be offered in Gainesville, Florida, beginning May 18th, at the Alachua County EOC building, 9AM-4PM, and continuing on roughly every other Saturday until July 13th. Final exam preparations are being handled by Field Examiner Allan West WA4JD.

Thanks to the incredible cooperation of the Alachua County Emergency Management department, the

building and the ZOOM webinar system will be available, so that “distance learners” may be able to participate in the training.

The ARRL EC-001 course is a great course with a lot of hands-on assignments and thought-provoking and useful homework.

For more information and to sign-up, Jeff Capehart W4UFL set up a google sign-up page here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeYWEtdhXvjyut6-xvZiYXooYqlcJHDOqSVXp03ND1H3_3-iA/viewform

Note that participants will need to have completed IS-100 and IS-700 prior to taking the final examination for credit, but can register for the course without have completed these excellent free online courses in the ICS system.



LARA Participates in Exercise

Frank Anders, KK4 MBX

LARA Members supported the Central Florida Disaster Medical Coalition on a regional full-scale mass casualty exercise in 40 hospitals across Central Florida, Thursday, April 11. While emergency communications were not included in the exercise, LARA members served as casualties. Pictured is Ed, N4ZIV along with and event organizer and the Mayor of Leesburg, FL.



Northern Florida Section SEC Report for March 2019

Karl Martin KG4HBN, ARES Amateur Radio Emergency Service, Section Emergency Coordinator, North Florida Section



Northern Florida Section SEC Report		March 2019
Report	Counties Reporting	County in NFL
Number of Counties Reporting	12	43
Total Number of ARES Members		436
	Number of Events	Hours
Exercises & Training Sessions	75	711.5
Public Events	3	622.5
Emergency Operations	0	0
Skywarn Operations	8	16.0
Total	86	1435.0
Comments		
I will include the Section Emergency Coordinators monthly report in the Northern Florida Sections newsletter to keep everyone updated on ARES in the section. Feel free to contact me anytime with ideas or questions.		
Karl KG4HBN kg4hbn@arrl.net		

FCC Testing Information

4 Corners Radio Club, Clermont FL

- First Saturday
- 10:00 AM
- Cagans Crossing Library, Rt 27, Clermont, FL
- Walk-ins welcome
- Info: WA2FRW@aol.com

LMARS FCC Testing

- Third Saturday every month
- 9:15 AM
- Seminole County Sheriff's Office
Off SR 17-92, on 100 Eslinger Way in Sanford
- For more information and registration, contact Bob Cumming, W2BZY, 407-333-0690 or w2bzy@cfl.rr.com

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

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 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 for more information

Silver Springs Radio Club

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

Hog County Amateur Radio Association

- First Saturday, 11:00 AM, starting September 1, 2018
- Cross Connection Church, 1451 West County Road 476, Bushnell, FL 33513
- Info: sumterVE@gmail.com

QCWA Chapter 45, Orlando FL

- Second Thursday
- 11:00 AM
- Golden Corral, 5535 S. Kirkman Ave, Orlando
- Walk-ins welcome
- Info: WA2FRW@aol.com

Remember: Bring photo ID, CSEs, copy of current license, exam fee in cash, exact change.

Links to the NFL Web Site

For net, hamfest and other events go to www.arrl-nfl.org or select the option below. Web Master Bert Garcia, N8NN, maintains an up-to-date and detailed listing of all NFL nets and activities. If you need to make a change to an existing net or activity, or add a new one, contact Bert at: n8nn@arrl.net.

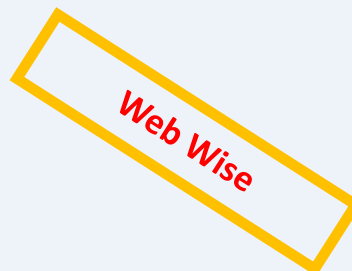
[Section Nets](#)

[Northern Florida STM Report](#)

[Florida Hamfest/Convention Calendar](#)

[Operating Events](#)

[Emergency Communications Archive](#)



NFL Officials

Section Manager – Kevin Bess, KK4BFN

Assistant Section Managers – Joseph D. Bushnel W2DWR, John C Reynolds W4IJJ, Dave Davis WA4WES, Jeff Capehart W4UFL, Neil Light KK4VHX, Ray Crepeau K1HG, Steve Szabo WB4OMM

Section Emergency Coordinator – Karl Martin KG4HBN

Section Public Information Coordinator – Scott Roberts KK4ECR

Assistant SE Coordinator – Robert A. Mitchell W4HKG

Section Technical Coordinator – Frank Haas KB4T

Affiliated Club Coordinator – *Appointment Pending*

Section Traffic Manager – Tom Housworth, KI0JO

Official Observer Coordinator – Robert Leasko, WB8PAF

State Government Liaison – Darrell Brock N4GOA



Newsletter of the Northern Florida Section of the ARRL

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

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