



Ye Olde Reflector

Hi Folks,

We're finally down to December, and it's time to take a collective breath and sit back for a long winter's rest. 2011 has been a busy year, and November was no different.

First off, I want to say thanks to the numerous cooks, those manning the cookers and the kitchen at the church, and those of you who labored many hours at home, for the great feast we enjoyed at the November Fish Fry. The sign-in sheet shows 80-plus people present, and that's probably a low count as I think a few didn't sign in with us.



Also congratulations to Abbie, Henry, Jackson, and Kyle, who were our 2011 "Golden Mic" winners. As an instructor, I can tell you that these kids, with the addition of several others, always brighten up our classes. Their successes also add a shine to our club efforts, and I know we are all justifiably proud of their accomplishments.

We still have the “2011 Military Vet of the Year” plaque to present, but that winner was not present at the meeting.

I’m staying purposely short with the President’s letter, as there is a longer column on the back page we now refer to as the “Fireside Chat.” A number of years ago, someone said my time in office was beginning to look like FDR’s and that year, I did the first Fireside Chat in honor of the nationwide radio “chats” FDR did during his term.



The idea stuck, and time now shows I have eclipsed FDR in both re-elections and time served. I’d have never guessed that would be the case way back in 1995.

Thanks to **Mo, KI4PZS**, we’ve got the “**Closer to Christmas Party**” set for December 17th at the Wharf Express – Southwood, at 7pm, in Tallahassee.

This is an informal get-together for everyone to share some Christmas cheer and fellowship before we go our separate ways on the actual holiday.



As several people have asked, it DOES NOT replace the regular meeting on December 3rd, at the Plaza.

We'll have a map and menu up on the website for those who want to make the trip. Those who attended last year had a good time and the food was great and service was fast.

We'll also have two additional Nets this month, on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. We'll move them both back to 9pm, as several grandparents indicated they'd like their grandkids involved and said they'd be arriving later than 8pm.



Billy Joe, W4ZDP, and his kids talk to Santa!

We do encourage kids and other relatives to check in as third parties (hear that Mrs. Inez??) and I promise the Net Control will make their airtime painless....

Well, as I said, there's a lot to discuss on the back page so I'll close here. I hope you will make plans to attend the regular meeting at the Plaza on the 3rd, and then the "Closer to Christmas Party" on the 17th.

Wishing you all a joyous Christmas Season!

Mike



The following members of our Radio Family have December Birthdays!

Roberta Maddox – Dec. 1st
Dan Farnsworth – Dec. 10th
Nirmal Singh – Dec. 11th
Wayne Lambert – Dec. 15th
Stephen Tyre – Dec. 17th
Carol Wetherington – Dec. 20th
Pete Donovan – Dec. 28th
Larry Bostic – Dec. 29th

Don't see your birthday? Let us know at w4ucj@arrl.net



It's Official!

The 2012 Officer Elections were held at the November meeting, and John, KE4RWR, Chairman of the Nominations Committee, presented the following slate:

President – Mike Brown, KE4FGF

Vice President – John Swicord, KE4RWR
VP of Special Events – Wynona Sadler, KF4HSM
Secretary – Dana Swicord, KJ4GWB
Treasurer – Bobby Cooper, N4KXL
Newsletter Editor – Buddy Peeples, WD4CJI

The slate was approved and the members present unanimously voted to close the nominations and voted in the slate as presented.



The December Test Session will be by appointment only. This prevents our VEs from showing up as this busy time of year and having no one to test.

TARC is extremely lucky to have a team of 38 dedicated Amateurs making up our team. We wish all these folks a very Merry Christmas and also say “THANKS!” for all that you do!



The results are in and W4UCJ successfully defended the 2nd place position in Class 4F.

Looking back at 2010, the Top-5 finishers stayed the same with the 3rd and 4th place station trading places. The 2011 results were:

#	Call	Score	Category	QSOs	Power Mult	GOTA Call	Section	Participants	Club
1	K2BAR	7,300	4F	2,282	2	KC2ZMA	NNJ	43	
2	W4UCJ	6,632	4F	1,630	2	KI4PZS	GA	70	
3	W8FY	6,420	4F	2,212	2		OH	24	
4	W5NGU	5,686	4F	1,285	2		NTX	120	
5	W1AW	5,415	4F	3,376	1	K1NO	CT	11	

In 2010, W5NGU was in third place and W8FY was in fourth. Obviously, all five groups redoubled their efforts as all five scores went up from 2010.

Remember too that these scores are more impressive given that W1AW is a well-known call, guaranteeing that a lot of stations would be trying to work them.



Congratulations to the W4UCJ FD Crew for another impressive operation!

NØ Tenna Wizard

SOLDERING

This article will continue my "basics" articles by writing one on soldering. It amazes me that many hams are afraid to solder. It really is a very simple process. It is a necessary skill set that must be learned if you intend to work with antennas.

Perhaps the first thing you need to know about soldering is one word ***** SHINY *****. Shiny is good when it comes to soldering. Quite often I have seen people try to solder something that is dull and has oxidized. This will just not allow solder to flow and to adhere to the parts that you are trying to solder. If you are going to solder something, take a knife, or Scotch Pad and rough up the surface to be soldered. Make it shiny and solder will love it. If solder will not stick - it either is dirty or is not copper.



The second thing that I have seen people try to do is to use a soldering iron or soldering gun that does not have the screws holding the tip in place tightened tight enough. When you pull the trigger on a soldering gun, the tip should be smoking in 3 to 4 seconds. If it is not, tighten the screws that hold the tip in place. And I mean really tighten them TIGHT!!!

Another problem is using a soldering instrument that is too big or too small. Delicate items (such as transistors, IC's, etc) should be soldered with a soldering iron no bigger than 20 watts. Antenna connectors (like the PL259 used for coax cable) require much more heat - I like to use a 200-watt soldering gun on them.

Now, once in a while you need to solder something like copper pipe. That requires a propane torch - or - I like to use a Mepp's gas torch. The Mepp's gas burns much hotter and makes short work of soldering copper pipe, such as for j-pole antennas. They make wire brushes for cleaning the joints that need to be soldered. These brushes are excellent for removing oxidization from copper pipe.

Now, soldering iron and gun tips will become tarnished from use. One way to clean them is to use a damp paper towel. Just wipe the soldering iron tip on the paper towel then apply a bit of solder to the tip to make the tip shiny with solder and you are ready to use it.

The way that I like to apply solder is to get the tip of the iron or gun shiny with solder, place the tip between the parts that you want to solder, press down to apply pressure on the two parts, then apply solder.

Now, solder should never be used to stick two items together. You should first make a strong mechanical joint, and then solder them together.

Lead-Tin solder used outdoors will deteriorate with time, especially if it is in contact with the ground. Silver solder will stand up to the environment pretty well but it is very expensive. If you make a solder joint that will be exposed to the weather, protect it with GE silicone or other means.

Try soldering. It is fun and easy to learn.

73 & CU on the Air
Terry, N0TW

TARC Meeting Minutes for 11/12/11

1) Welcome and Announcements:

Mike, KE4FGF stated the meeting at 7:45pm with the following announcements. The November Test Session will be by appointment only. The Midmonth Breakfast is cancelled but the Rag-chew Breakfast for “Black Friday” is not. Finally, there will be no Nets on Thanksgiving Day.

2) Minutes and Treasurer’s Reports - Approved

3) Old Business:

The following station were recognized for their service during the Spaghetti 100: KW4EF, KJ4KUJ, KI4RGD, KC4LYC, KK4DZB, KJ4KUJ, N4APO, Matt Kornegay, N4KXL, NY4D, KJ4GOJ, KE4URL, KJ4UKR, N4KGT, KE4FGF, and of course, our mascot, Rudy, K9ARF

The following station were recognized for helping with the Boston Mini Marathon: KF4HSM, KJ4KUJ, KW4EF, N4KXL, KJ4OSU, AK4KC, KJ4GWB, KJ4UKR, KE4RWR, KJ4GOJ, KK4DZB, N6BWQ, KI4PZS, KJ4KUK, WD4CJI, KE4FGF

The following stations were recognized for taking part in the Archbold Exercise: KJ4ZNK, KJ4UKR, KE4RWR, N4KXL, NY4D, KW4EF, KJ4KUJ, KK4DZB, N6BWQ, WD4CJI, N4ETA, KJ4GOJ, N0TW, N7SDQ, KE4FGF.

Mike commented that it was really great to have so many participating, particularly during the Archbold exercise, which took place on a weekday.

Terry, N0TW asked about the status of the 147.195 repeater, and Mike reported that Norm, K4GFD, had donated a new power supply to replace the one currently giving problems, and that the repeater would be returned to service as soon as Bill could get us in. The current supply will be rebuilt as a ‘hot standby.’

4) New Business:

John, KE4RWR, who headed up the Nominations Committee of Nirmal Singh, Wally Guynn, and Alfred Hufstedtler, presented the Officer Slate for 2012.

**President – Mike Brown, KE4FGF
Vice President – John Swicord, KE4RWR
VP – Events – Wynona Sadler, KF4HSM
Secretary – Dana Swicord, KJ4GWB
Treasurer – Bobby Cooper, N4KXL
Newsletter Editor – Buddy Peebles, WD4CJI**

The members voted to close nominations and placed the slate to a vote, which was unanimously approved. John thanked the committee, and also the officers for making themselves available to serve another year. Mike was recognized in particular for 2011 being his 17th year in office, and for never missing a club meeting during that time.

Mike announced that Mo, KI4PZS, has us signed up for the “Closer to Christmas Party” to take place at the Wharf Express Southwood on Dec. 17th, at 7pm. A menu and map will appear on the website for members who want to attend. Mike mentioned that the food was great, service was fast, and that everyone who attended last year had a great time.

Mike then began the awards ceremony for the 2011 Golden Mics and Vet of the Year.

Abbie Leverett, KK4DZA, received the first award because she is the youngest Tech that the club has licensed so far. Abbie is 8-years-old.

Henry Leverett, KJ4VHK, was recognized for his determination to get his license. Mike said that he always worried that kids who didn’t pass the first time out would quit, but Henry had shown great resolve in getting his license. Henry, who is 10-years-old, is currently holds a General class license.

Kyle Swicord was recognized for getting the most Youth contacts at Field Day this year. Kyle stayed up all night (a first for him) and totally filled out his contact sheet. Mike also told about how he helped brighten up the classes and keep the other kids interested.

Jackson Leverett, KJ4NFB, was recognized as the youngest Extra that we've licensed so far. Jackson, who is 11-years-old, was also asked to join the Instructor Group and help Mike teach the Technician classes. He readily agreed.

The Military Veteran of the Year was not in attendance, so that award will be presented later.

As a final bit of business, Dana again asked for additional recipes for the TARC Cookbook. As Bobby was absent, she also asked that anyone wanting to pay their 2012 dues, to see her after the meeting.

As there was no further the business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 with 87 members, family, and friends in attendance.

**Respectfully submitted
Dana Swicord, KJ4GWB, Secretary**



Weather Center

2011 SKYWARN™ Recognition Day
Date - 1900 December 2nd to 1900 December 3rd EST

December 3rd is SKYWARN™ Recognition Day, an event first established in 1999 by the National Weather Service and the American Radio Relay League. The purpose is to acknowledge the contributions that volunteer SKYWARN™ radio operators make to the National Weather Service (NWS). During the day SKYWARN™ operators visit NWS offices and contact other radio operators across the country.

Amateur radio stations located in National Weather Service Forecast Offices across the country will work together with a common goal to make as many contacts as possible with other NWS stations and with amateur radio operators during the 24 hour exercise.

Radio stations will be operating on 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, and 2 meters using phone operations. Some sites may utilize other modes such as PSK-31, RTTY, packet, and CW, IRLP and Echolink so be creative and use all modes available to you.

Remember to give a signal strength report, your location, and a brief one or two word weather report like sunny, cloudy, or heavy rain. This is not a contest but results will be posted so make as many contacts as you can.

Let's work together to make this day a success as we recognize those who work to be the eyes of the National Weather Service by providing all important ground truth reports during severe weather events.

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas Season,
Stewart
KJ4GOJ
DEC NWS Tallahassee, FL
Georgia ARES



Good Evening Friends,
Time again, to sit back, kick off our shoes, and reflect on what blessings we've shared in the past year.

The last few years have seen large strides in what our club does, and 2011 was no different. I always wonder if we'll hit a high point and fall back, but so far, that hasn't been the case.

I think the thing I'm most proud of is the success we've had doing upgrade classes. We shoot for two a year, one in February and one in August. They've both been really successful in getting new hams licensed and upgrading everyone else.

The session in August also added an Extra class, and that resulted in several upgrades, most notably **Jackson, KJ4NFB**, who is 11-years-old.



Abbie, KK4DZA and Jackson, KJ4NFB with their CSCEs

Jackson will play an even bigger role when we do the next classes, as he will join Zach, Lowell, Thomas, Terry, and me as a member of the Instructor group. I'm thinking he will be a real asset in the Tech Class, as we have a good number of kids getting involved there.

The August classes saw Jackson's sister **Abbie (now KK4DZA)**, who is 8, get her Tech license, and younger brother **Henry, KJ4VHK**, get his General.



Henry, KJ4VHK and his CSCE as a new General

Henry, who is 10, got a lot of Facebook attention with his upgrade, particularly from a posting of his picture on the QRZ page, and **Dave, W2SL**, who is the editor for QRZ.com, sent Henry his email address for correspondence if he needed any help.



Winding down after a stint on the mic at FD.

2011 has really been the “Year of the TARC Kids” as they made their presence known in most everything we did.

Though we didn’t do a Georgia QSO Party station this year, I made a trip to Moultrie and watched **Tommy, KJ4SWI**, work pile-up after pile-up from the CCHRS station. He also made plenty of points at Field Day as he and a number of others did an “all-nighter” to run up the points.



Tommy, KJ4SWI, Kyle, and Colby, KJ4GOK at FD

We are also planning to start a Kid’s Net for the group in 2012 and Tommy is slated to be the main Net Control. I already know he’ll be great in that position.

The Field Day results show us holding second position nationally again, and I think it’s great because all the stations we were in competition with stepped up their efforts. And, if you look at the results listed elsewhere in the newsletter, you’ll see the ARRL station, W1AW, behind us at number 5.

Because of the notoriety of that call, they are almost guaranteed pile-ups, and we easily bested them. My congratulations and thanks to everyone who worked so hard to run up that score!



Honestly, I've never really worried about the final count. True contesting can lead to aggravation, short tempers, and hard feelings, and I really want to avoid that at ALL costs.

It's more important in my mind for everyone, particularly the new folks, to get some radio time and have fun doing it. Fun, and getting the whole family involved, is what we're really after during all our events.

2011 saw the return of the 147.195 repeater to its 1000' post in Metcalf, and that was cause for celebration when everyone saw what sort of footprint it has at that height.



Those are treetops down there...not grass!

Currently the system is waiting to go back up there, after experiencing power supply problems. **Norm, K4GFD**, has donated a replacement and we'll be rebuilding the old one as a "hot standby" in case there are further problems.

In addition to 195, we also added two repeaters at the EOC, one on 146.865 MHz. and one on 442.00 MHz. The repeaters belonged to **Jim, KS4JW**, who is now a Silent Key. His wife, **Holly, K4FUR**, made them available to the club and they are operational on the dual band antenna Thomas County has installed there for us.

Jim had a lot of equipment and Holly asked if we could help her with finding all that stuff a new home. As we've talked for the last few years about what it would be like to do a hamfest, we decided to try a tailgate party for starters, with Jim's gear taking a prominent place.

We decided to set up antennas and power supplies to allow anyone buying a piece of gear to try it out beforehand. **Bill and Dawn** arranged for us to use Morningside for the event, and it was a real success, as there was plenty of space for the antennas, and for outside "tailgaters" to set up.

It's already in discussion to do this again, as most people walking through asked when we'd do it again. There is still gear left from last year, so we'll be looking for a nice spring Saturday to get set up and work on growing this event.



VE Session at Field Day

Our VE Team continues to be a real success story, as it now sports 38 members. That's more people than some have as regular members, and I feel really blessed to have that many people interested in helping give test sessions.

We had to move the venue to the Thomas County EOC, as the Library is undergoing renovations, and that led to using the afternoons following tests as class days to learn more about anything Amateur Radio related that had enough people interested. The one

class we have done was on APRS and the class went really well. We're looking forward to doing more this year.



The November Fish Fry was another critical success this year with over 80 people in attendance. The main menu was catfish and mullet, with tables full of other great side dishes to fill our plates.

It's always really great to see all the family members who show up for this and there were a number of new faces in the crowd as we have a bunch of new members.

The meeting afterwards was kept short to allow more time for cleaning up the facility, and to keep folks from dozing off from all they'd eaten.



The main business was to select new (?) officers for 2012, and to present the service awards we know as the "Golden Mics."



Kyle wins for most Youth FD Points

The kids swept the awards, and that's as it should be because they've worked really hard all year. You really won't find many clubs who have as many kids participating as we do now, and that's something I take a LOT of pride in...don't you?

The major reason an organization succeeds is that they have the right people in the right places, and our group is well blessed in that respect. As you probably know, the Officers from 2011 were re-elected to serve another term and I'd like to touch on their contributions here for a moment.

We got a chuckle out of the fact that the only time **John, KE4RWR**, gets to run a meeting is when we have Officer Elections (the By-Laws prohibit the President from doing so). What wasn't mentioned was all the other stuff he does during the year to take some of the load from me.



John, Wynona and Dana share a light moment at the Fish Fry

We mentioned that we'd saved a lot of money on the cooking oil for the Fish Fry by getting some from Seminole Wind, and that idea came from John. He's taken my place on the Repeater Committee and is responsible for getting the 195 machine back home. He also arranges the accommodations for the classes and other events that require audio-visual support.

Wynona, KF4HSM, runs our special events, including the food arrangements for Field Day, the Fish Fry, and the Radio Reunion when it's our turn. That's a LOT of behind the scenes work, plus twice a year, she gets up really early and does a tailgate breakfast for the Peacock Day Parade and the Boston Mini-Marathon (as well as setting up that parade too).

Dana, KJ4GWB, has the job of keeping up with what happens at the meeting and that's a tough job sometimes as things happen quickly and it's hard to keep up with who said what. She also works with Wynona on the events, and is working with Theresa on a new club cookbook.



Bobby, N4KXL, is busy keeping the bills paid and keeping us solvent. He's held most of the officer positions at one time or another, and has been a club member for a long time. This year saw Bobby get a new van, and that has needed to happen for a long time. We've got him "radioactive" there too, complete with a spiffy fold-down antenna.



Buddy, WD4CJI, is the person who keeps us in newsletters like the one you're reading now. Buddy, like Bobby (and sometimes interchangeable!) is a long time club member. He's been facing some medical problems and doesn't get to do as much as he'd like, but we hope that's all behind him now.



Though he's not an elected officer, **Lowell, NY4D**, has given us a media presence that we've never had before. Between the website and the Facebook page, the continuing "Adventures of TARC" are read about by a ever larger audience, and that credit goes to him. He's also been under the weather of late, but he indicates that he has it whipped.

While I've named off a few, I've only touched the surface, as there are a lot of other folks who also make major contributions to our "Radio Family" all the time. To name all of you would take pages and pages, and I've already gone on a long time here.

I've talked numerous times about what kind of group I think we have, but I wonder how many of you have really stopped to think about what we have going here. Yes, we talk up the idea of being a family oriented group, but do you realize how far that goes?

A number of local groups do look at us and note that our people take being a “TARC Radio Family” member pretty seriously. Radio brought us together, but we quickly found out that we were more than just fellow operators who used ‘Brand X” radios.

Our real strength is that we made it past being simple acquaintances to being really close friends who care about one another.

Can you think of a better Christmas present than that?

And I’ll leave you with that thought. It’s been a privilege to be your President for all these many years, and I look forward to seeing where we’ll go together in 2012.

I wish you all the most joyous Christmas ever!

Mike

Next Meeting Saturday Night Dec 3 2011 at the Plaza