



The TARC Reflector - February 2012

Hi Folks,

January just flew by and we're faced with a busy February. We started 2012 with a large number of people at the meeting...60 to be exact. That's a REALLY great way to start out the New Year!

Our discussions centered on the calendar of events for the first 6 months, and they are all pretty much shaping up to be busy.



As there were only four Saturdays in January, the second one found us at the Thomas County EOC for a test session, and we had two people show up for tests. **Andrew**

Kitchens, KW4EF's brother, and **Anthony Wilhoite**, a young man Gina brought over from Madison.

Andrew had been studying for a bit and I'm guessing that there was also some tutoring from Bill. He had no problems and left with a CSCE in hand as a new Tech. His new callsign is **KD8ROW**. Several folks think that is a vanity call, but it's not. "8-Land" simply hasn't progressed as far as "4-Land" has with sequential callsigns.



The new KD8ROW!

Unfortunately, Anthony had a few problems, mainly centered on having no study materials (he'd taken a few tests on www.qrz.com), and didn't pass his tests. We've rectified that situation and he will also be attending the February classes so we can help him get his license.

And Anthony, don't feel bad about this. You did very well considering that you had nothing to study. Take heart, we're in your corner and will help you make sure that the next time out will be different...

It was about this same time that we heard that the Madison ARES Group was making a big change...they decided to become a club. That's a really big step.



“Mini-Field Day” with the Madison Amateur Radio Club

They’ve always been an impressive ARES group, and as they have no repeater (that’s being addressed as we speak) they have taken the time to do simplex tests all around the county and map the places they need to be to pass traffic.

Pat, K4NRD, is a great leader, and I’m guessing he will be the club’s first President. Whoever that may be, I know this group **WILL** do great things. By the way, the young man seated behind Gina in the picture above is the aforementioned Anthony...a soon-to-be Ham.

The third Saturday of the month found a number of us at the GPSTC in Forsyth for the Georgia ARES Section Convention. ARES members from around the state come together here for some “personal networking” and find out more about where GAARES is headed for the year.



The Auditorium at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center.

The sign-in sheets show 247 signatures, and there were probably a number of people who missed them. We had two excellent speakers, **Nick Brown**, GEMA's State Interoperability Officer, and **Lans Rothfus**, the Meteorologist in Charge of the NWS office in Peachtree City.

Lans' presentation in particular was punctuated by great sound effects; a severe thunderstorm complete with dime and quarter size hail.



Can you pick out the pocket change in this picture?

You could tell what Lans wanted to do was walk outside and see what was going on, but he managed to continue with his presentation. The storm was a “harbinger of doom” for the rest of us though, as we’d have to drive through it on the way home.



No, Dana didn't drive this truck home!

There were a number of emergency response vehicles on display, as well as some interesting restoration vehicles (like Dana's fire truck) inside. There were also forum tables set up in the cafeteria with various organizations and radio-modes on display. The forum area is still a work in progress, and we hope add a lot of growth in this area.

The drive home, as indicated above, was interesting. The same heavy rain, winds, and lightning remained pretty intense, and we rode through it starting around Perry and pretty much the rest of the way home. While we found no more hail, the lightning display was impressive and almost constant. Thankfully, we all made it home with no problems.

February promises to be busy again, with the meeting on the first Saturday, the Orlando “Hamcation” on the second, and Upgrade classes on the final two.

I always look forward to the classes because it's a really special thing to help the students better themselves. And this year, we have two more instructors joining the group. **Mary, KI4JOO**, will be in the Extra Class and **Jackson, KJ4NFB**, will be with me in the Tech Class.

As we usually have a number of kids in the Tech class, Jackson will be a real asset and example of what a little study can do. The same thing goes for Mary, as we usually hear the ladies say, “I can't do this because I don't know anything about electronics!” And Mary says, “YES YOU CAN!”

Finally, on a sad note, we lost **Walt, KI4TFL**, and **Maxine Black**, mother of Amy Castleberry, this month. While Maxine had been really sick for a long period, Walt's passing was a particular surprise as he'd just come home from the hospital with a good report, and was in high spirits. Please remember these families in your thoughts and prayers.

The February meeting will take place at the Plaza on February 4th. Plan on arriving at 6pm if you want to have supper, and the meeting will follow at 7:30. The principal topic will be getting ready for the classes, and the "TARC Tailgate," which is scheduled for March 24th.

I'm also told that **Terry, N0TW**, may have an interesting door prize. If you want to know what it is, you'll just have to come to the meeting won't you? I look forward to seeing YOU and your family there!

73,
Mike



The following Members of our Radio Family have February Birthdays!

Sally Moniz - Feb. 4th
Mike Brown – Feb. 15th
Norm Scholer – Feb. 18th
Dave Hand – Feb. 26th

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

Calendar of Club Events for February-March 2012

Feb. 4th – Regular Club Meeting – Plaza – 6pm, supper – 7:30pm – Meeting

Feb. 6th – 10th – Severe Weather Awareness Week in Georgia

Feb. 8th – 9am Statewide Tornado Drill (Alternate Feb.10th at 9am)

Feb. 10th, 11th, and 12th – Orlando Hamcation

Feb. 18th – Upgrade Classes 9am-4pm, followed by a Test Session at 4pm

Feb. 25th – Upgrade Classes 9am-4pm, followed by a Test Session at 4pm

Mar. 3rd – Regular Club Meeting – Plaza – 6pm, supper – 7:30pm – Meeting

Mar. 17th – Midmonth Breakfast, 8:30am, Seminole Wind

Mar. 17th – Monthly Test Session – Thomas County EOC, 10am

Mar. 24th – TARC Tailgate

Ragchew Breakfast – every Friday morning at Seminole Wind – 8:30am



TARC February Classes

TARC holds classes for new hams and upgrades twice a year, and 2012's first session is set for the final two Saturdays in February, which are the 18th and 25th. **We'll be in our regular classrooms at Archbold Memorial Hospital.**

A map to the location is at

<http://thomasvilleamateurradioclub.com/2012/01/10/february-classes/>

The classes are free and run from 9am – 4pm, with a Test Session following each class. Walk-Ins are welcome at both test sessions. You do not have to attend a class to take a test.

Our Instructors are:

Tech Class – Mike, KE4FGF, Jackson, KJ4NFB, and Zach, KJ4LOO

General Class – Lowell, NY4D, and Thomas, W4TBJ

Extra Class – Terry, N0TW, and Mary, KI4JOO

We teach from the **ARRL Q&A Manuals**, and if you need a copy, email Mike at ke4fgf@arrl.net and he can get you a copy for \$15. He'll need to know by February 6th, 2012, to insure they arrive on time. You can also get these manuals direct from the ARRL, at www.arrl.org or any of the online Amateur Radio Dealers like HRO or AES, ***but the price will be higher.***

The cost for taking a test is \$14 and you'll also need a picture ID, and if upgrading, a copy of your current license.

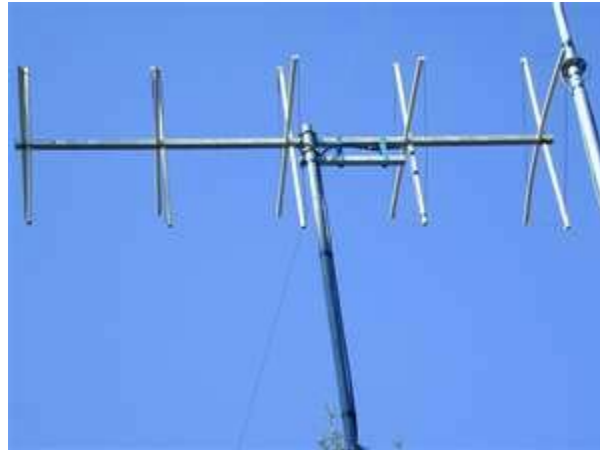
Parents, you need to be aware that you'll need your child's Social Security Number for the FCC paperwork when they pass a test. That's a Federal requirement, not ours.

If you have further questions, contact Mike at ke4fgf@arrl.net

NØ Tenna Wizard

5 Element 2m Quad for Portable Operation

My article this month is for a 2-meter portable antenna with lots of gain. Its main function is to provide additional gain when operating portable from fringe areas, such as during bike rides or other events. It is designed to be assembled and taken apart easily. This antenna is a 5 element 2m quad antenna. There is no reason it could not be built for permanent installation.



A basic 5-element Quad built with PVC pipe

This antenna began its life as a design by KD6GLF. His design used spreaders that are fixed to the boom and are not easily removed. This would not be good for transporting to portable locations. By modifying his design, I have been able to develop a quad where the spreaders are easily removed with a single screw/wing-nut, thus making it more suitable for portable operation. I will have this antenna on display at the February Club meeting and it will be given away as a door prize.

Some dimensions - the boom is constructed from a 72" 2 x 2 (pressure treated). The wire element lengths are: Ref 88", DE 82", D1 80", D2 78" and D3 76". The wire can be just about any gauge, but I used #10 AWG because that is what I had available. The element spacings are measured from one end of the boom: Ref is 2.5", DE 19.5", D1 32.5", D2 48.5" and D3 67.5".

This quad is fed directly with coax. A better match could be obtained by using a 1'-1 1/4" piece of RG-59U (75 ohm) coax feeding the quad and then 50 ohm coax back to the transmitter. However, the additional SWR can be tolerated just by feeding the quad directly with 50-ohm coax.

I used 3/8" oak spreaders in the model that I constructed, but fiberglass would work better for a permanent version. PVC would also work.

Hams who are having trouble getting into the repeaters should build an outside antenna to improve their signals. This quad is certainly a good antenna to help with that effort and the cost is really cheap.

Build one and try it. You can even mount one in your attic and you will be surprised at its performance.

Perhaps we should schedule another antenna building session? They are a lot of fun and produce some really good antennas for home use. Let me know if you are interested in building a j-pole, Moxon, or quad antenna.

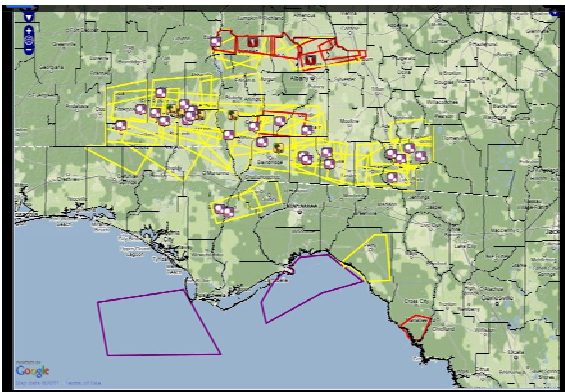
73 & CU on the Air Terry, N0TW



Weather Center

Looking back on 2011 there is no doubt it carved a deep mark in the timeline of history for a variety of reasons, but one will certainly be the extreme weather events that occurred. As we draw closer to our severe weather season, let's review a few of the events in 2011 that not only impacted our region directly but had lasting effects on areas across the Southeast U.S.

Here in the Southeast, the year began with the 10th coldest January on record in the Tallahassee forecast area. There was also a rare freezing rain event across the northern portions of the Southwest Georgia area. Freezing rain can cause an inordinate amount of property damage as a result of falling trees, power lines, towers and other structures that yield under the weight of the frozen precipitation. Fortunately accumulations were not excessive and damage areas were limited with this event. The 2010/2011-winter season was the 6th coldest on record for the Tallahassee forecast area and this prolonged cold pattern had a direct effect on delaying our severe weather season.



The severe weather season waited until March to really get started and was marked by several events that included large hail, straight-line wind damage and tornadoes. Classic supercells and LP supercells moved across the area on March 26th-27th. A few of the cells had a track with some of the largest hail our area has

seen in a number of years. Several members of the local amateur radio group worked these storms with mobile operators that provided the National Weather Service with ground truth information for the warnings that were issued.

Things did not slow down in April and on the 5th a squall line raced across the Southeastern U.S. with over 1,300 tornado, hail, and wind damage reports across a widespread area. Locally heavy wind damage was seen in multiple counties with wind damage surveyed in Grady and Leon counties that support straight line winds in excess of 70 mph. Damage from strong straight line winds are often mistaken for tornado damage due to the extreme nature and the size of the trees that are affected. Unlike tornado damage, there will be a linear pattern to the debris that give clues that straight-line winds, caused by a mixing down of the stronger winds aloft, are the culprit.

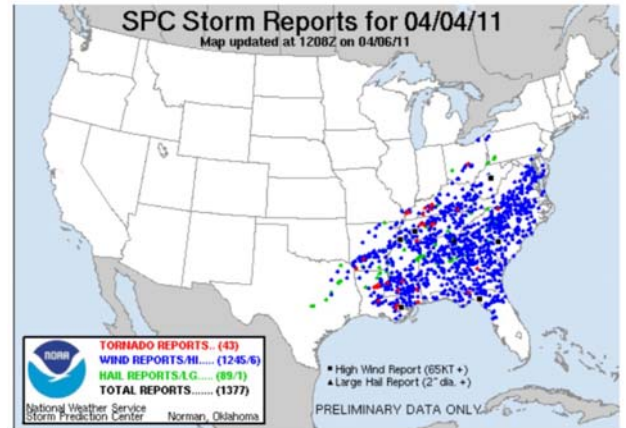
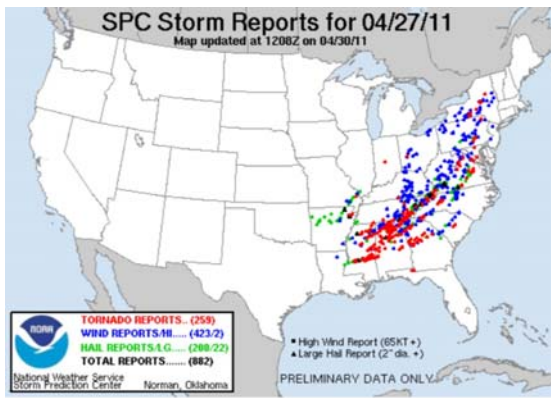


Figure 1. Storm reports relayed to the NWS from 1200 UTC April 4 through 12Z UTC April 5, 2011.

Weekly, severe weather continued throughout April building up to an epic event that occurred during the last week of the month. Violent storms showed the full fury a major tornado outbreak could bring during a three-day severe weather event that is now known as the 2011 Super Outbreak. With over 300 confirmed tornadoes and 322 tornadic deaths this outbreak ranks among the worst in United States history. The ARRL reported the important role ARES played in the aftermath of this terrible tragedy across the states affected by this event. As we all know Tuscaloosa, AL was especially hit hard when an EF4 tornado roared through the town. Amateur radio was ready to provide communication assistance among the devastation that made other means of communication impossible. The Southwest Georgia area was spared from the devastation of this event but other areas in Georgia were not so lucky. Tornadic storms did pass very close to our area and with only a few changes in the setup our area very easily could have been involved.

The 2011 tornado season culminated with an EF5 tornado that proved to be the deadliest single tornado of all time. The mile wide tornado plowed through Joplin, Missouri leaving devastation in its path. A total of 158 people lost their lives from this single tornado making it the deadliest tornado of all time. The horrifying pictures of the aftermath resemble a war zone that has been subject to an unprecedented bombing attack.

The primary severe weather season for the Southwest Georgia area is just around the corner often beginning in February and lasting through April. We never know when history will repeat itself but we do need to be prepared to do our part as amateur radio operators. Providing much needed information to the National Weather Service during events from organized spotter networks and support communication for agencies in the



immediate aftermath of is a key role of ARES members. The responsibility of our spotter networks should be taken very seriously as 2011 clearly illustrates and I would encourage us all to improve our ability to provide this support in any way that is possible. Hope to see you at the Georgia ARES Section Convention in Forsyth!

Stewart Chandler, KJ4GOJ,
DEC NWS Tallahassee

TARC Meeting for 1-7-12

Welcome and Announcements:

Mike welcomed everyone to the meeting. We had a lot of visitors, and Mike asked for introductions. Kerry, AI4CW, introduced her mom and dad, Boyd and Sandra Owens. Bill, KW4EF, introduced his brother, Andrew, and his wife, Betty. Wally, KJ4KUK, introduced his daughter Sarah. Robbie Pitts, KK4FGM, his wife Ashley and son Jo-Jo, came to visit for the first time (and left as members). Bruce Brockman, K4KRO, and Robert White visited from Cairo. Suzanne Gill, an aspiring Ham also came up from Monticello.

Following the introductions, Mike made the following announcements:

Test Session- January 14th at the Thomas County EOC at 10am.

Midmonth Breakfast- January 14th at 8:30 a.m. at Seminole Wind.

Ragchew Breakfast- Every Friday at 8:30 a.m. at Seminole Wind.

Georgia ARES Section Convention- January 21st at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forysth, running from 9:30 am. until 4:00 pm.

Minutes and Treasurer's Report:

The Minutes and Treasurer's report were accepted as presented.

Old Business:

Closer to Christmas Party- There were 37 people in attendance and the location was wonderful. W4EAF, Nick Adams gave door prizes for this meeting.

2011 Vet of the Year- This award is for Walt Hendricks, who is in the hospital at Lake City. His continuing bad health won't allow him to attend so Dan, KF4WF, is going to take it to him. We all wish him well.

Kid's Net- There were nine check-ins on the first Net, which took place on January 3rd. Tommy, KJ4SWI, informed us that their first topic was what they got for Christmas. Mike said that Tommy is doing an excellent job with the Net.

New Business:

147.195 Repeater Update- John, KE4RWR, informed us that the repeater was back up and running with a few problems. When the door is open the RF present on the platform causes the machine to go haywire. When the door is closed it is fine. They also installed a battery to help as a surge protection.

Facebook page and Website: Both are doing great. Lowell, NY4D, gave a report on usage and indicated the site had a lot of visitors. He further said that people who visit the site are staying there for at least 3 minutes, which is a really good sign that they like what they see. Lowell also wants to add links to other club member's personal sites.

Calendar- The first 6 months activities show us that January and February are already pretty well booked. Mike will update the calendar with any additional events as soon as he can verify them.

Classes- February 18th and 25th are set for the first Upgrade Classes of 2012. The Instructors will be:

Tech Class – Mike, KE4FGF and Jackson, KJ4NFB,
General Class - Lowell, NY4D, and Thomas, W4TBJ
Extra Class - Terry, N0TW, and Mary, KI4JOO

If you have students who need manuals please see Mike about them quickly because he will be placing the order on February 6th. The Tallahassee ARS will also be having a Tech class on January 28th.

Terry, N0TW, brought copies of the ARRL Radiogram and ICS-213 (ARES Version) for anyone who needs them

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm with 49 members and 11 visitors in attendance.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Dana Swicord, KJ4GWB
TARC Secretary**

A Friend's Tribute

There was a child, the apple of his fathers' eye.

There was a young ranch hand who helped his father on the ranch

There was an underage Marine who went to war.

There was a wounded veteran who returned from the war.

There was a truck driver.

There was a Greyhound bus driver for 39 years.

There was a beautiful lady working at the Bus Station who married him.

There was a golfer.

There was an avid fisherman.

There was a Deputy Sheriff.

There was a grandfather who loved his grand and great-grand children.

There was a enthusiast citizen band radio user.

There was a gentleman who was very considerate of the Ladies.

There was an Amateur Radio Operator KI4TFL who was a glib talker

and could speak with anyone about everything.
There was an active member of the Thomasville ham radio club
who participated in their many activities.
There was my friend and buddy who gave me advice
and helped me with the hay harvest.
That was Ray Hendricks...and Ray we'll miss you.

Dan, KF4WF



In Memoriam



Walt Hendricks, KI4TFL



**Maxine Black,
Mother of Amy and Virgil, KJ4ZNK**

**Please remember the Hendricks and Castleberry Families
in your thoughts and prayers as they face the days ahead.**



*Time is too slow for those who wait,
too swift for those who fear,
too long for those who grieve,
too short for those who rejoice,
but, for those who love,
Time is eternity...*

Happy Valentine's Day!