

The TARC Reflector - January 2012



Happy New Year!!

Hi Folks,

Once again, we find ourselves with the fresh new slate that a new year brings to us.

We start 2012 with a new Net for us, the Kid's Net on Tuesday Night at 8pm. It's something we've been working on for a long time, and with the number of kids now becoming involved, we hope it will really take off.

Net Control duties will be handled by Tommy, KJ4SWI, and I've already seen email coming from him to get the kids revved up for their Net. One of the goals is to get the kids more comfortable behind the microphone, and the hope is that someone closer to their age will be better equipped to do that.



I've heard Tommy run the Moultrie club Nets on several occasions, and he does a great job. I'll be curious to see what he's come up with for this Net, as it has all been placed in his capable hands.

As there are only 4 Saturdays in January this year, we're moving up the Test Session weekend to January 14th, and again, we'll be located at the Thomas County EOC. That same Saturday is also the date for the Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society's "Techfest" in Lawrenceville.

The Techfest isn't a conventional Hamfest. There is a tailgate area outside, but the booths inside are used for teaching various aspects of the hobby. You say you wish you knew how to solder?...there's a booth for that. You want to try one of the new soundcard digital modes?...there's a booth for that too. Anything technical, that is better taught by an "Elmer" probably has a booth set up. More info on this event can be had at www.gars.org

Saturday, January 21st, will find a number of us in Forsyth for the annual ARES meeting, and this year, we've been approved to make it an ARRL sanctioned Hamfest. It will be known from here forward as the **Georgia ARES Section Convention**. The agenda for the meeting follows later in the *Reflector*. The reason we made it a sanctioned event is that it will appear in *QST*, hopefully guaranteeing more attendance, plus they also provide additional door prizes.



Georgia State Patrol portable towers

While there won't be any vendors, there will be a lot of stuff to see, as the parking lot will have a number of emergency response vehicles and trailers.



GEMA ERV with Satellite communications capability

All in all, the Convention should be both educational and fun, and if you're interested in emergency communications, you should think about making the trip.

The final Saturday of the month gives us a breather as February is already shaping up to be a "barn-burner" too. If you want to pre-mark your calendars, have a look at the website, and you can make your plans early.

The January meeting will take place at the Plaza on the 7th, with supper at 6pm and the meeting following at 7:30. I'd like to discuss some of the events we'll be involved with over the first six months of the year, so we can get them on the club calendar too. Knowing this allows us to more properly promote our activities earlier, which helps with their success.

So, I hope you'll make plans to be there with us and help us chart the course the club will follow in 2012. I look forward to seeing YOU and your family there!

73 & Happy New Year!

Mike



The following members of our Radio Family have January Birthdays:

Paul Wittenborn – January 14th

Brandon Swicord – January 18th

Barbara Moody – January 23rd

Philip Neidlinger – January 29th

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

A note from our Treasurer

Happy New Year Everyone!

Well it's that time of the year again...."Dues Time". Actually it's a little past that time as far as our membership dues are concerned.

We have traditionally started taking up club dues at our annual club fish fry in November. We try to have all in by February so that we can update the club membership roster.

At this time we're about halfway there. I try not to say much about this and we don't send out any notices, so it doesn't hurt to put a friendly reminder in the newsletter.

If you'd like to take care of this at the meeting this Saturday you can see me or you can send them to my home address here in Thomasville, which is:

**Robert Cooper
519 Libby Lane
Thomasville Ga. 31757**

Our dues are \$20.00 for singles and \$25.00 for families. You can also donate to our "Equipment / Repeater Fund." In the past, the club suggested \$5.00 per month or \$60 annually but this was and is only a suggestion; you can donate any amount you wish to help in the upkeep of our repeaters

Thank you for your quick attention to this and again I wish each and everyone a Happy New Year"!

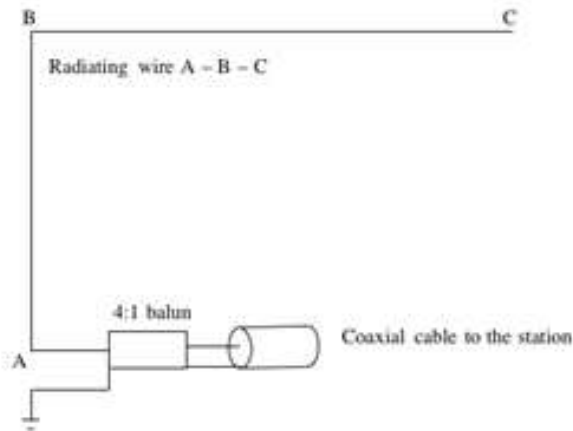
Bobby...N4KXL Treasurer

NØ Tenna Wizard

10-Meter L-Antenna

Many new hams do not know what type of antenna to install for operation on the 10-Meter Band. Too often, the expense of commercial antennas frightens new hams from getting on 10-meters. This need not be. If you have a HF transceiver that is capable of operating on 10-meters, this is a great antenna to get started operating on this band.

The vertical portion of this antenna can either be aluminum or copper. It is 8 ft 7" in length and is vertical. The horizontal portion of the antenna is a wire that is 8 ft 5" in length. Connect your coax (center wire to the vertical radiator and shield to the horizontal wire) - and erect the antenna on your chimney or hang from a tree and you are ready to try operation on 10 meters.



It is a good idea to use a choke balun (such as sold by Palomar Engineers) or coil 5 turns of coax around a short piece of 4" PVC pipe. This will keep any RF from coming back into your shack and causing your computer to go crazy.

This antenna will have both vertical and horizontal polarization, so it should work well with either type of incoming signal.

If you do not have materials to construct one of these, I can help you. Just drop me an email and I will bring the materials to the next club meeting.

Anyone with Technician or higher license has voice privileges on the 10m Band.

This antenna is very low profile - it would be difficult to spot it even in neighborhoods that have restrictions against outside antennas. If anyone says anything, slip a piece of PVC pipe over it and call it a flagpole.

For the past 5 years or so, 10-meters has been dead. It is not dead anymore. I talk to Europe almost every day and many of them are running vertical antennas and 10 watts or less. There are two nets that meet every day for 10-10 International on 28.35 and 28.8 MHz at 1pm local time.

HF is a lot different from VHF or UHF operation. For one thing, you rarely know just what part of the country (or world) that you will talk to next. I find operation on the 10-meter band to be very exciting.

Try ityou'll like it!

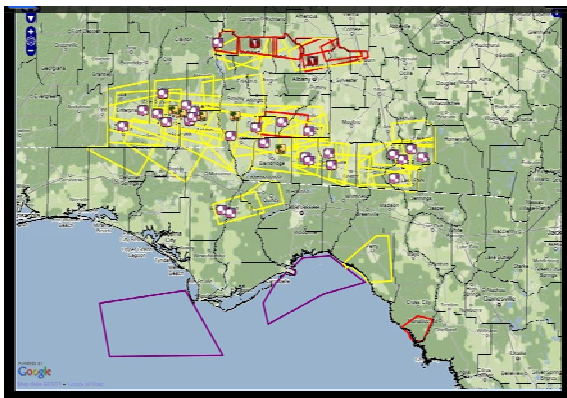
73 & CU on the Air
Terry, N0TW



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

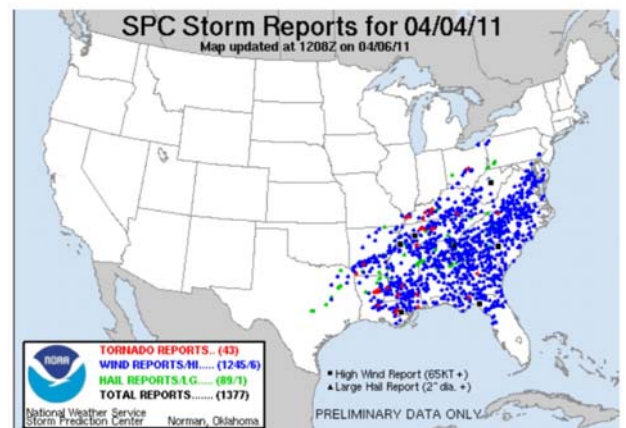
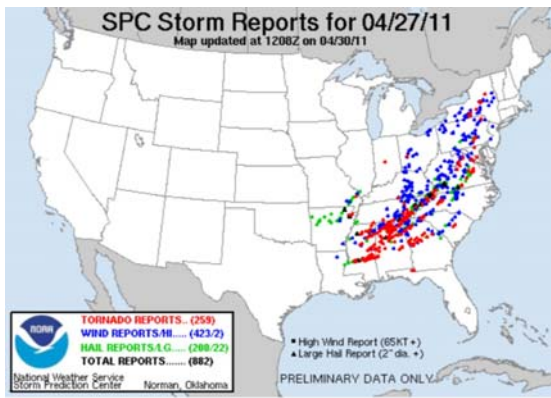


Figure 1. Storm reports relayed to the NWS from 1200 UTC April 4 through 12Z UTC April 5, 2011.



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.

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

Calendar of Events for January – February 2012

January 7th – Club Meeting

January 14th – Midmonth Breakfast – Seminole Wind, 8:30am

January 21st – Georgia ARES Section Convention – Forsyth – 9:30am

February 4th – Club Meeting

February 11th – Orlando Hamfest

February 18th – Day 1 – TARC Upgrade Classes (Test Session follows)

February 25th – Day 2 – TARC Upgrade Classes (Test Session follows)

Ragchew Breakfast – Every Friday 8:30am Seminole Wind



Test Sessions and February Classes

The VE Team will be holding a test session at the Thomas County EOC on January 14th at 10pm. The cost to test is still \$14 and you'll need to bring two forms of ID, one of which has your picture. Walk-ins are welcome.

In February, the regular test session will be incorporated into classes for aspiring Technicians, and upgrades to General and Extra Class. Those classes will be held on two consecutive Saturdays, February 18th and 25th. All TARC Classes are free to anyone, club member or not.

If you simply want to test, the sessions will begin at 4pm on both days.

Again, our classes are free, and if you need a study guide, contact Mike at ke4fgf@arrl.net and he can obtain them at the cost of \$15 each. You need to do this by February 1st.

TARC Meeting Minutes – 12/3/2011

Welcome and Announcements:

Mike, KE4FGF, opened the meeting at 7:35pm and made the following announcements:

The Test Session for December is by appointment only. Only one person has called but will be taking advantage of the test session in Tallahassee. Due to the date being the same as the Christmas Party, the Mid-month breakfast is canceled. The Rag-Chew Breakfast continues every Friday at 8:30 a.m. at Seminole Wind.

There will be two additional Nets in December, on Christmas and New Year's Eve at 9:00 pm. The time is moved back an hour to allow extra time for grandkids and visitors time to arrive.

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

Old Business:

Mike announced that the "Closer to Christmas Party" would be held in Tallahassee at the Wharf Express Southwood on December 17th at 7:00 p.m. A map to the location and a menu will be posted on the website.

We are still working on getting a callsign for use at the Thomas County EOC. Mike indicated that the paperwork isn't complicated. After obtaining a call, we intend to get "WX4UCJ" as a vanity call, to compliment our present club call.

The 195 MHz. Repeater has been repaired and is ready to return to service. Norm, K4GFD, donated a new power supply. John and Bill are working to get their schedules together so it can be returned to the tower in Metcalf.

New Business:

2011 Vet of the Year

The vet of the year was not present at the meeting so Mike will present it in January. Mike gave the assembled members a look at the award, which is a glass plaque.

Tommy, KJ4SWI, has been tapped to run a club Kid's Net, which will start at 8pm on the first Tuesday night in January 2012. In addition to being Net Control, his ARES position is being upgraded from Assistant EC-Youth for Colquitt County, to that of Assistant DEC – Youth for Southwest Georgia.

Mike indicated that the kids would run the net, with only kids checking in, and no adults. Tommy already has some experience as a Net Control as he is a back-up net control for the Moultrie club's net.

Lowell, NY4D, Buddy, WD4CJI, and Walt, KI4TFL, have been really sick for the past few weeks and Mike passed around two "Get-Well" cards for Lowell and Walt. Buddy has recovered somewhat, and was well enough to attend the meeting.

Because the Georgia Legislature changed the Automobile Tag law to once again charge for Ham tags, the club elected to let the "W4UCJ" tag, procured for the trailer, lapse due to the high cost of renewal. As the current tag then becomes a "One of a Kind," Mike presented it to Bobby, N4KXL, for his tag collection.

Closing the books on 2011:

Mike finished the meeting by going back over some of the club's accomplishments during 2011. They were:

- 1) Our Classes continue to net new hams and upgrades. The classes are run twice a year. As Zach may be moving away to attend another college, Mike has added Jackson, KJ4NFB, to the Instructor Group, mainly to help run the Tech classes with Mike, and to give additional support to the kids who are in the class.
- 2) The VE Team has grown to 38 members, most of which are Extra Class. Mike recalled that it was not too long ago that they worried about having enough VEs to give a test.
- 3) TARC held it's first "Tailgate Hamfest" in 2011, and we are already looking at doing this again. Since the Radio Reunion did not happen last year, Mike posed the idea of possibly doing the Tailgate Hamfest and the Radio Reunion on the same day. This will be discussed further as we get closer to the event.
- 4) TARC's 4F Field Day entry was once again #2 nationally. The "Top 5" stations were the same group as last year. Mike pointed out that we were again several positions ahead of the ARRL Headquarters station, W1AW.
- 5) The Club currently has 8 club repeaters available, five analog machines and three digital D-Star machines. The Club also enjoys use of the KE4URL and W4DXX repeaters in Reno.
- 6) Our current Roster shows 170 people involved with our club. We cover 14 counties in South Georgia and North Florida.

Mike finished by stating that while 2011 had a lot of great things that happened, 2012 should be even better.

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dana Swicord, KJ4GWB, Secretary



AGENDA
GEORGIA ARES SECTION CONVENTION
JANUARY 21, 2012

Theme: Emergency Communicators/Emergency Coordinators. Communications during emergencies or disasters may stretch our comfort zone. During times like this, we are not just Hams, but emergency communicators. As such, we may be called upon to augment other aspects of public safety communications. The Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) from GEMA will discuss real world disaster communications and the various (ACU1000, Satellite, 800MHz) non-Ham communications we may be called upon to assist with.

0930 – 0945 Welcome and Introductions

0945 – 1050 First Guest Speaker Presentation + Q & A

Mr. Nick Brown, SWIC, GEMA

1050 – 1100 Door Prizes

1100 – 1300 Lunch - Please visit the various forums and displays.

NWS: Moderator KN4YZ, Lynn Bianco, ASEC

PUBLIC HEALTH: Moderator W4TGA, Barry Kanne, ASEC

DIGITAL: Moderator KG4VUB, Tom Olley, ASEC

NETS & TRAFFIC: Moderator K4GK, Charles Pennington, DEC

D-STAR: Moderator WB4QDX, John Davis, DEC

ARRL: Moderator W4AYK, Gene Clark, SM

DISPLAYS: Various emergency communications vehicles and trailers.

RED CROSS ECRV: W4RBB, Bob Butler, DEC

GEMA Emergency Communications Vehicle

GSP Portable tower

Mobile Communication Van, WB4BDP, Clyde Mathe

Gwinnett ARES Comm. Vehicle

1300 – 1400 Second Guest Speaker Presentation + Q & A
Mr. Lans Rothfusz, MIC, NWS Peachtree City
1400 – 1415 - Break
1415 – 1500 - Hot Topic / Group Discussion (State ARES ID, AG4ZR, David Benoist)
1500 – 1510 - Door Prizes
1510 – 1520 - Break
1520 – 1535 – ARES Ham Of The Year-2011
1535 – 1550 Final comments from ARES Officials (W4AYK, Gene & KE4FGF, Mike)
1550 – 1555 Grand Prize
1600 – Adjourn - Please drive safely!

State of the Club, 2012

As is customary, please let this stand as the President's Report on the "State of the Club" as it enters the year 2012.

1) Membership:

Good progress continues in adding new members and our meetings are well attended with an average attendance of 45 people. The current role shows 172 people involved with the club. Potential new members have better ways of finding out more about us, with the Club Website and Facebook page both playing large roles. Classroom upgrade session also continue to do well, and add both new members and allow upgrades of present members.

2) Finances

Both the regular checking account and the repeater fund are in outstanding shape and we begin 2012 with far more funds than usual. Outside contributions and early payment of club dues have maintained the checking account at a stable level. The addition of a tailgate hamfest also helped bolster the club treasury.

Contributions to the Equipment/Repeater fund have grown far more this year than in years past, and that allowed the club to repeater list to grow to eight machines available.

It should be stated here that the recommended amount for a donation is \$60 annually, which is \$5 per month. As this is a voluntary contribution, the amount does not have to be \$60, if a member wants to contribute a greater or lesser amount that is perfectly acceptable.

3) Repeaters

2011 saw continued growth to the W4UCJ Repeater System, with the 147.195 machine returning to Metcalf.

The three D-Star repeaters, operating under the call sign KJ4PYB, continue to function well.

4) VE Team

We finish the year with 38 VEs on board, most of which are Extra Class Ops. Because of the geographic placement of our VEs, the TARC Team can hold test session in a number of places outside Thomas County with minimum effort.

The Instructor Group ends the year with KE4FGF, NY4D, KJ4LOO, and W4TBJ being joined by N0TW and KJ4NFB. This allowed us to add an Extra upgrade class to our offerings, and that added several new Extras and 4 new VEs to the group.

5) ARES Group

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service group is continuing to grow in both personnel and knowledge. Several positions have changed hands and several new ones were added, principally in Grady ARES.

Due to the continued interest in emergency communications, TARC again posted a 2nd place nationwide finish during the Field Day exercise in class 4F, successfully defending the position against the increased scores from our competitors.

6) Archbold Radio Station – WX4AMH

The hospital station is undergoing some changes to the antenna system, as well as a desk arrangement to allow the station to remain set up and ready to operate.

7) PEACH – the Club Communications trailer

The club added a Kenwood TS-480 HF radio to the trailer's equipment, and KE4FGF also added a "Tipper" tower to the tongue. KJ4UKR and KE4FGF built out an antenna mount they saw in QST, which utilizes the trailer's back bumper, and that arrangement makes adding another antenna very easy.

Objectives for 2012

1) Training:

- a) **SKYWARN Classes** – Because of Stewart's webinar format Skywarn classes, it becomes very easy to accomplish either basic or advanced training and as we have new members, that training needs to continue
- b) **Simulated Emergency Test** – The 2011 SET had Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, North and South Carolina, and North Florida participating with us. Several area EOCs were manned and the group in SWGA performed very well, meaning we'll need to "up the ante" for 2012.

- c) **Field Day** – the 2011 event ended with TARC again in the #2 position, nationally, in class 4F. Even though we didn't participate in 2011, I'd like to see us use the Georgia QSO Party as a "spin-up" to this event again in 2012.

2) New Member Recruitment – Youth Group

We have added a number of kids to our group through our classes and through recruitment. For 2012, Tommy, KJ4SWI will begin running a "Kid's Net" to help get the kids we do have more involved, and hopefully generate enough interest in adding more kids.

3) Full time radio gear for the Thomas County EOC:

GEMA has provided a D-Star VHF/UHF radio for the Thomas County EOC. I'd like to see us look into getting a full time HF radio for that installation too, so that a deployment is as simple as showing up. A dual band antenna was provided with the GEMA radio, and we'd need to mount it, and an HF antenna to the EOC tower, so it would become "plug and play."

Summary:

The Club is in really good shape going into 2012, following another "banner" year in 2011. We accomplished a lot more than expected, which sets the bar pretty high to do as well again this year. But, our group is healthy and interested in accomplishing new goals and in my estimation, at this time next year; we'll be looking back on 2012 as yet another great year!

de KE4FGF



In Memoriam...



Michelle Guynn



Donald Potts

**Please remember the Guynns and Alberstadts
In your thoughts and prayers...**