

# November 2011 Reflector

Hi Folks,

The countdown clock for the 2011 Fish Fry has almost run down and the anticipation is at an all time high. The number of participants is fluctuating above 100 and that's really great!

The fare will be catfish and mullet, plus many, many side items coming in from home. Since I help Wynona with the emails about what's coming in, I can tell you we will all be wishing for extra large plates to sample all the good food making its way to our tables.

We'll be arriving at 3pm to start the cooking chores and if you'd like to help with that, please know that we appreciate ALL the helping hands we can get to both prepare for the meal *and clean up afterwards*.



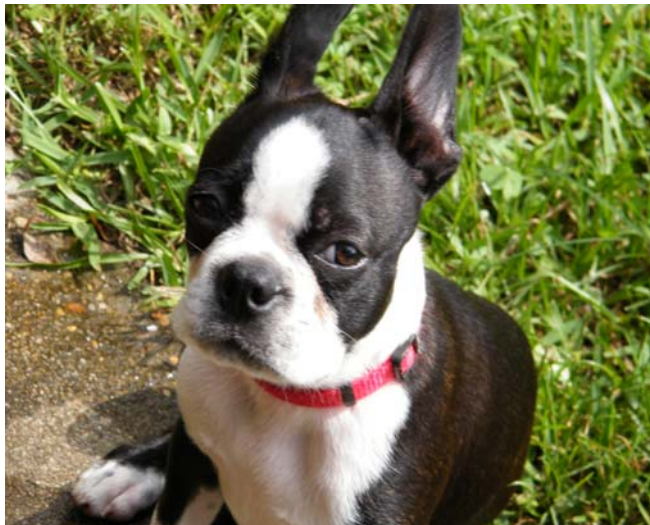
The location is Morningside Methodist Church, which is on the corner of Pinetree Boulevard and Smith Avenue.

We're shooting for 6:30pm to be ready to eat, and following supper, there will be a short meeting with the chief business being the presentation of the 2012 Officer's Slate, and the presentation of the 2011 Service awards.



Is your name on one of these awards? The only way you can find out to gather your family and join us for an evening of food, fellowship, and fun.

October has been a busy month for us with numerous operating events. We started off with the Spaghetti 100 Bike Ride on Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>. The event ran smoothly and we had plenty of participation including the following stations: **KW4EF, KJ4KUJ, KI4RGD, KC4LYC, KK4DZB, KJ4KUJ, N4APO, Matt, N4KXL, NY4D, KJ4GOJ, KE4URL, KJ4UKR, N4KGT, KE4FGF, and of course, our mascot, Rudy, K9ARF.**



October 27<sup>th</sup> was an ARES event where we were deployed in support of the Archbold group of hospitals and Thomas County Fire Rescue. Four Hospitals (Archbold, Brooks County, Grady General, and Mitchell County), the Thomas County EOC, and three District Command Fire Stations (Ochlocknee, Coolidge, and Boston) were manned. Stations involved were: **KJ4ZNK, KJ4UKR, KE4RWR, N4KXL, NY4D, KW4EF, KJ4KUJ, N6BWQ, KK4DZB, WD4CJI, N4ETA, KJ4GOJ, N0TW, N7SDQ, and KE4FGF.**

We wound up the month on the 29<sup>th</sup> with the Boston Mini Marathon. 7am found us gathered around Wynona's truck having a tailgate breakfast provided by both Wynona and Dana. If you weren't there, you missed a real treat. This event also ran smoothly and in record time. Stations here were: **KF4HSM, KW4EF, KJ4KUJ, N4KXL, AK4KC, KJ4OSU, KJ4GWB, KJ4GOJ, KJ4UKR, KE4RWR, KK4DZB, N6BWQ, KJ4KUK, KI4PZS, WD4CJI, and KE4FGF.**

I don't have to tell you that these are really great attendance numbers, particularly for the hospital drill, which was on a weekday. Many thanks to those of you who took the time to participate in these events. It is REALLY appreciated!

Because of the approaching Thanksgiving Holiday weekend, the November Test Session will be by appointment only, and the Midmonth Breakfast will be cancelled. We'll also be cancelling both the Thursday Night Net and SW District ARES Net that would occur on Thanksgiving night, so that everyone who would be involved can spend time with their family.

A quick word here too that the "Closer to Christmas Party" is now scheduled for December 17<sup>th</sup>, at 7pm, at the "Wharf Express – Southwood," which is at 3197 Merchant's Row Boulevard, in Tallahassee. This is a different location than last year (the Wharf Express now has three locations) and directions and a map will follow in the December newsletter. Everyone who attended last year really enjoyed this event too, so mark your calendars now and plan to join us.

Also, to make it clear, the regular December meeting is still at the Plaza on the first Saturday night. The event at the Wharf Express is a Christmas party...not a meeting.

That's enough from me at this point. I hope you and your family are making plans to join us this weekend at the Fish Fry, but if not, I wish you a very happy Thanksgiving and we'll get together again in December

73,

*Mike*

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## 10-10 Scholarship Applicant Information

Each year the **10-10 International Net**, through our nonprofit corporation, the **10-10 Scholarship Foundation**, funds four \$1,500.00 scholarships, which are administered on our behalf by the **Foundation for Amateur Radio**.

Dave Prestle, W8AJR, Chairman of FAR's Scholarship Committee, announced the four most recent winners of the

10-10 Scholarships in the October 10-10 News. Over the past 24 years, 10-10 has funded 87 scholarship valued at \$91,000.00.

Applicants must be licensed radio amateurs. There is no restriction on the course of study, but applicants must intend to seek at least an Associate Degree from a college or university.

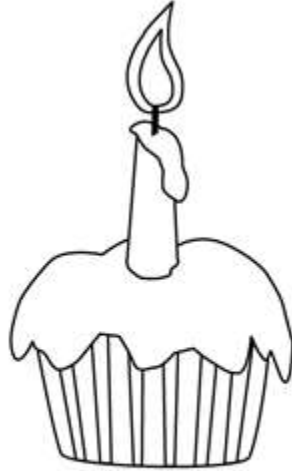
Non U.S. Amateurs and those seeking graduate degrees are also eligible. Foreign members please note that students who study outside the United States are also eligible to receive a 10-10 Scholarship.

It is suggested that every 10-10 member encourage qualified college-bound radio operators to take advantage of this opportunity. Request an application from:

**FAR Scholarships**  
**P. O. Box 911**  
**Columbia, MD 21044-0911**

Applications can also be downloaded from FAR's website:  
<http://www.amateurradio-far.org/>  
Applicants, except those who are active 10-10 members, must provide a recommendation from a 10-10 member. Completed applications must be received by FAR prior to April 15th.

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## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

The following TARC Radio Family Members have November Birthdays!

Alice Childs – Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>  
Lori Alberstadt – Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>  
Russell Shirley – Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>  
Debbie Myer – Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>  
Nell Alligood – Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>  
Kim Hearn – Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>  
Farley Light – Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Nathaniel Lambert – Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>  
Taylor James – Nov. 28<sup>th</sup>

Don't see YOUR birthday?...let us know at [w4ucj@arrl.net](mailto:w4ucj@arrl.net)

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## ***NØ Tenna Wizard***

### **ANTENNA BASICS**

While teaching the Amateur Extra Class, several topics about antennas were discussed. I decided that I should write an article dealing with antenna basics since not everyone is familiar with these topics.

Hams talk about antenna wavelengths in "*meters*" and we also refer to them by "*frequency*". What is the relationship between the two? Well, "frequency x wavelength = 300". So, if you have a 2-meter antenna, it is  $300/2 = 150$  MHz. In reality, an antenna cut for 147.195 MHz would be 2.038 meters long (full wavelength). Not quite 2 meters, but close enough.

Now, we don't always use full wavelength antennas. For example, a common antenna is the 1/2 wavelength dipole antenna for 75 meters. So, using the same formula,  $300/3.8$  MHz = 78.95 meters or 258.95 ft. So 1/2 wavelength would be 129.5 ft. Note that I used the conversion of 3.29 ft per meter.

Now, when you build an antenna it will be resonant on just a small portion of a band. When you plot its SWR versus frequency, the curve will be in the shape of the letter "U". To simplify, the flatter the curve, the broader the frequency coverage of that antenna. Also, antennas that are too short will have "capacitive reactance" while those too long will have "inductive reactance". Adding an antenna tuner will eliminate either of the reactances but it will not change the resistance portion of the impedance. Thus, minimum SWR for any antenna may not be exactly 1.0 SWR.

So, do you have to put up with a poor SWR? No. You can add components that change the impedance of the antenna to something closer to 52 ohms, which would give you the 1.0 SWR. Examples of matching networks include: quarter wave matching section, gamma match, beta match, omega match, delta match, and balun. All of these devices can be used to match the impedance of an antenna to the impedance of the feedline.

If you are trying to tune an antenna, use this trick. Measure its SWR at the low end of the band and at the high end of the band. If the SWR is lower at the low end of the band than at the high end of the band ... The antenna is TOO LONG. The opposite holds true if it is lower at the high end of the band. I must caution you that it is not always possible to get a perfect 1.0 SWR match. Anything less than 2.0 will work.

Antennas have polarity. Mobile antennas have "*vertical*" polarization while most HF antennas have "*horizontal*" polarization (flattop). The antenna will have both magnetic (H-Plane) and electric (E-Plane) characteristics. It is the E-Plane that determines whether the antenna is vertically or horizontally polarized.

A vertical antenna radiates its power equally around a circle. Beam antennas bend this power into a certain direction, concentrating its signal both on transmit and receive. The degree of how much power is bent is normally due to the number of elements and the length of the boom on which the elements are mounted. Gain is measured in dB (decibels). 3 dB of gain is roughly equal to a 2x power gain. So if you have an antenna with 6 dB of gain, it will have 4x power gain. If you lose 3dB of power, you have lost half of it.



## November Test Session

First, the TARC VE Team had a special session on Sunday Oct. 30<sup>th</sup>, for Robbie Pitts, who is from Moultrie.

Robbie is excited about becoming a Ham, so KE4FGF, W4TBJ, and KJ4NGB met with him and he passed his Tech exam with flying colors. Congratulations to Robbie and we look forward to hearing you on the air!

Because of the approaching Thanksgiving holiday, the November Test Session will be by appointment only, to prevent having our VEs show up and then having no one to take a test.

Anyone interested in taking a test will need to contact Mike at [ke4fgf@arrl.net](mailto:ke4fgf@arrl.net) to set this up. Have a great Thanksgiving!

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## Madison County ARES Field Day

We are planning our Field Day exercise for Saturday, November 19, 2011.

Gina, W4GNA is coordinating this event and we appreciate her assistance very much. We plan to be on the air by 10:00 AM that morning so please bring your equipment prior to that so everything is ready to go.

Please support Gina as she guides us through this important project. Our goal is to see where we can talk, not how many contacts we can make.

People receiving this outside of Madison County can help by monitoring your radios on Saturday, November 19 from about 10:00 AM until noon or so and giving us signal reports. We will work any VHF and UHF repeaters we can hit and all HF bands we can tune.

HF frequencies will be announced. If we get you on VHF we may ask you to move to HF for signal reports.

Thanks to every one for helping in this event.  
Pat, K4NRD  
EC, Madison County, Florida

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## **TARC Meeting Minutes for 10/01/11**

### **Welcome and Announcements:**

Mike, KE4FGF, opened the meeting at 7:30 pm and made the following announcements. The October Test Session is cancelled due to the Spaghetti 100 Bike Ride. The Midmonth Breakfast is set for the 15<sup>th</sup>, starting an hour early at 7:30am at Seminole Wind. The Rag-chew Breakfast continues to be well attended and happens every Friday morning at 8:30am at Seminole Wind. Finally, the Coastal Plains ARC is sponsoring a Formal Message Traffic Class taught by Charles, K4GK in Tifton on October 8<sup>th</sup> at 1pm.

### **Minutes and Treasurer's Reports – Approved as reported.**

In **Old Business**, Mike led a discussion on the Simulated Emergency Test, held earlier today. We had good participation and learned a lot about where we are as an ARES group. Several Hospitals and the Thomas County EOC were manned and we were able to



check into several different Nets statewide. The results will be collated by the county Emergency Coordinators and turned in to the ARRL for posting.

Mike then led a discussion on updating the club's Insurance policy, including upgrades to the present information and adding the new repeaters and HF rig. We'll also check into insuring the club trailer and its contents.

In **New Business**, we discussed the upcoming Spaghetti 100 on October 15<sup>th</sup> and also agreed that due to everything going on that we'd pass on participation in the Thomasville Fly-In. We'll also take part in the Boston Mini Marathon on Oct. 29<sup>th</sup> and Wynona indicated she'd be providing a "Tailgate Breakfast" for those participating.

We also discussed the November Fish Fry, which is set for November 12<sup>th</sup> at Morningside Methodist Church. The Pavo site has been abandoned due to continuing electrical problems. We'll begin gathering at 3pm for cooking chores and will try to be ready to eat at 6:30pm. Mike mentioned the "Golden Mic" awards, saying he wanted to focus on the kids, and the assembled group liked the idea.

Dana mentioned that she and Theresa are still at work on the club cookbook and that they were still looking for recipes.

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:35pm with 40 members and 3 visitors present.

Respectfully submitted,

**Dana Swicord, KJ4GWB**

### *Memories from a front porch...*

The day was quietly coming to an end as I sat on our front porch. Even though we'd had a few cool days, various bugs still droned in my ears, but in the distance, I could also begin to hear the metallic creaking and clanking that signaled the approach of the train coming from Coolidge.

Our house is about a thousand yards from the railroad and as there is little traffic, the rail bed is in disrepair. That means the train has to be run slowly, and the sounds of the almost idling engine aren't discernable until the train is pretty close. The clanking and screeching of the road wheels carries a lot further though.

As I sat listening to the sounds, I felt myself drift back a few years when, like tonight, I sat on the front steps of my grandmother's house, listening to those same sounds. I was around 9 or 10 years old at the time, and her house sat about 500 feet from the crossing.

The front steps were pretty wide, as are most steps from houses as old as that one was, and an uncle sat with me as the twilight and the train approached.

My uncle, Chuck, was an Army Vet who had served in Europe during WWII. He was an infantryman with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division, a unit whose nickname was “Hell on Wheels.” Chuck had more extensive training than a usual foot soldier, and though he never said so, was probably on course to be an Army Ranger when the war intervened.

Chuck was a 24 year-old Sergeant, and was slightly older than the usual recruits when the war came, and I imagine that he was similar to the character that Tom Hanks played in “*Saving Private Ryan*”; the “old man” the younger troops thought of as an uncle who was there to watch over them.

As we sat there in the gathering darkness, he began telling me a story from the war, where he and several younger soldiers were given a special assignment late one afternoon. The next morning, a German tank column was expected to attack their unit, and the advance was to come up one of the smaller roads in the area.



The unit commander figured if they could disable the lead tank, it would “bottleneck” the small road and hold up the column long enough to get more men and equipment into position to handle the attack...but what was the best way to accomplish that?

Looking over the weapons inventory, there was one lone bazooka with 4 rounds available, 2 armor piercing, and 2 high explosive. Upon asking who had been trained in the use of the weapon, it turned out that Chuck was the only one in the group who did.



It was decided that Chuck would go up the road a little way to meet the column with three of the younger soldiers, and a couple of squads in support, to do what they could to stop or at least delay the advance.

Choosing the downside of a hill as an ambush point, Chuck prepared the bazooka and showed the “youngsters” the proper way to reload it after he’d fired. He decided that the best course was to fire the armor piercing rounds first, in the hopes of breaking a track, as most German tanks were far too well armored for a bazooka round to penetrate the hull.

Since the tank would be at the top of the hill, they’d have a shot at the less protected undercarriage and maybe cause more damage. He’d then follow with the two high explosive rounds in the hopes of keeping the supporting German infantry off them long enough to escape.

Having laid their plans, there was nothing left to do now but wait.

Soon, there was a metallic clanking in the distance, and it was apparent that it was the sound of metal tracks on the road wheels of a tank....

He paused in his story for a moment, and told me that the sound was very much like what we were hearing from the approaching train. Years later, watching the climatic scene of “*Saving Private Ryan*,” I heard the sound of the tanks attacking the village, and they are indeed eerily alike.

He and the younger soldiers waited, alone with their thoughts as the sounds of the armored column got closer and closer. What does a 24 year-old soldier, let alone a teenage one; think about at a time like this?

And then a funny thing happened...before coming into sight over the hill, the German column came to a crossroads, and took a left turn, which took them into a better prepared area of the American lines. Fate had lent a hand and Chuck and his group came away unscathed.

At that point, the train horn sounded, and Chuck’s story ended as we both snapped back to present day. In the fading twilight, I could tell from the look on his face that he was remembering those boys from long ago, and what might have been if they’d also made it home from the war...



I've been lucky that most of the war vets I've known while growing up have been open to sharing their experiences without worrying about varnishing the story to shield me from the agony of war.

Because of them, I know what it was like to feel your ship being torpedoed, and then begin sinking beneath your feet. I know what it was like to be under constant sniper attack as you worked on the Burma Road, and I've felt the odd silence after landing on the beach at Iwo Jima and not being fired at for about 30 minutes.

I also know what it is like to open the back cover of your kitchen truck, and find 13 armed German soldiers who were little more than schoolboys, wanting to surrender if they can simply have some of the breakfast they smelled cooking....

Yes, you can read about war, but it will never be the same as sitting with a Vet and hearing them recount what they experienced first hand.

Friday, November 11<sup>th</sup> is Veteran's Day, and it is a day to both honor our Veterans and say thanks for all they have done. In particular, we are losing our WWII Vets at an alarming rate, and the time to honor them, and hear the stories is almost past as time marches on.

Our club has a number of men and women who placed themselves in harm's way to assure we have the freedom we enjoy today, and they are all willing to share those experiences with you if you simply ask.

On Friday, it's up to you...Find a Vet and say, "Thank You!"



*We wish Everyone a Happy Thanksgiving!*