



## **eNEWS** **May 2012**

[www.nfarl.org](http://www.nfarl.org)

**eNEWS** is “**what’s happening**” in **North Fulton!** Check the headlines of each item and mark your calendar. Go to [arrl.org](http://arrl.org) or [eHAM.net](http://eHAM.net) for the national news, but here is this month’s **North Fulton ARL eNEWS.**



### **Summary of Upcoming Events and Dates**

- **Every Wednesday** - Hungry Hams Lunch Bunch - 11:00 AM - Slopes BBQ, 34 East Crossville Road, Roswell
- **Every Sunday** - **NF ARES net** - 8:30 PM - 147.06 MHz (PL 100)
- **Every Monday** - **Tech Net** - 8:30 PM - 145.47 MHz (PL 100) - Check website for “how to”
- **Every Friday** - **Youth Net** - 5:00 PM - 145.47 MHz (PL 100) - Join Edward Doyle KJ4NRN and others
- **Second Tuesday** - **NF ARES meeting** - May 8, 7:00 PM at the Sandy Springs City office complex
- **VE Testing Session** - May 12, 10:00 AM - Alpharetta Adult Activity Center
- **Mid-Month Madness** - Dayton Hamvention - May 18-20. Go to [NFARL website](http://NFARL website) for info
- **Third Tuesday** - **Club Meeting** – May 15, 7:30 PM - Alpharetta Adult Activity Center, 13450 Cogburn Road, Alpharetta. John Kludt K4SQC discusses communications with the International Space Station based on a recent very successful contact with the ISS.

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### **May Program / John Kludt K4SQC**

What do NASA, AMSAT, ARRL and NFARL have in common? Earlier this year Jim Stafford W4QO, Andrea Hartlage KG4IUM (ARRL Southeastern Division vice director) and myself teamed up to support Parkside Elementary School in a very successful contact with the International Space Station. For this, all communications are on 2 meters: Think of it as a repeater contact with an odd split with the antennas on the tallest tower presently in existence! Please join us as I describe communications with the International Space Station based on this adventure.



In addition to NFARL, I am a member of a number of organizations, including ARRL, QCWA and GARS and am a lifetime member of AMSAT, having begun my satellite activities with AO-7 and the RS series of satellites in the early 1980s.

## Mid-Month Madness

The activity for May is always the Dayton Hamvention, the third full weekend of May. The dates this year are May 18-20. While you may not go every year, all amateurs owe it to themselves to at least go once to the international event. For the QRPers in NFARL, Four Days in May (FDIM) is *the* international QRP event, also in the Dayton area, running concurrently with Hamvention. The thoughtful folks arranging FDIM have set it up so you can attend both. More information can be found at [www.hamvention.org](http://www.hamvention.org) and [www.fdim.qrparci.org](http://www.fdim.qrparci.org)

## June Program and Activities

June at NFARL is always about ARRL Field Day. The June program will be devoted to the details of Field Day operations of K4JJ and NF4GA (our club calls) at the Waller Park Extension in Roswell, June 23-24. The goal of NFARL as always is to get just as many NFARL members and non-members on the air as possible. There is a role for everyone and you don't need to be an experienced operator to participate. More details to follow in the next newsletter but for now, please save the dates:

- NFARL Field Day Program, Tuesday, June 19
- NFARL Field Day, Saturday and Sunday, June 23 -24

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## ***President's Corner*** / *Wes Lamboley W3WL*

It truly makes me proud to be a member of NFARL! It is a lot of fun as well; as we had an exciting month what with the Georgia QSO Party and our members' participation in two CERT drills. Ham radio and our club did itself proud in these events. I participated in the QSO Party for the first time, and my friend George Nicholson N4GRN and I played "rover" and made QSOs from eight counties. We spent the night in a campground in Rabun County and managed to get a dipole up in the air in spite of it being dark (George is the one in the no-quite-so-yellow shirt in the photo at right, taken the next morning). We made a lot of mistakes and learned a lot and cannot wait for next year!



Also, I am proud of the club's helping 13 folks get their Technician license and 14 upgrading to General (Elmers are standing by)! The HamCram held at Brandon Hall School was highly successful and the facility is beyond description. We now have two science teachers at the school who intend to get a radio club started for the students.

And, Field Day is almost here and I hope that all of you can participate at the Waller Park Extension in Roswell. We will have a Boy Scout merit badge in the morning and operations will begin at 2:00 PM Saturday, June 23, with six stations operating at the same time for the 24-hour period. Dinner will be served at 6:00 PM Saturday evening. NFARL has been the country's "Participation Leader" for the past three years; let's make it four!

73, Wes – W3WL

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## **2012 Field Day Update** / *Scott Straw KB4KBS*

Planning is well under way for the 2012 edition of the NFARL Field Day effort. The planning team is starting to gel and the outlook is positive. We will be at Waller Park Extension again as in years past and the dates are June 23 and 24. We will be operating a CW station, a Digital station, a 6M SSB station, a Satellite multi-mode station, two HF SSB stations, and an HF Get-On-The-Air (GOTA) station. Now is the time to make your intentions know regarding operating.

The GOTA station is a unique opportunity for newly licensed hams to experience the joy of long-distance HF radio contacts. It is restricted as to who can operate it thusly:



[www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org)

**4.1.1.2. The GOTA station may be operated by any person licensed since the previous year's Field Day, regardless of license class. It may also be operated by a generally inactive licensee. Non-licensed persons may participate under the direct supervision of an appropriate control operator.**

**– ARRL Field Day Rules**

A quick search of the Internet revealed these unofficial definitions of “generally inactive”:

- **Any licensee who has never made HF contacts would be considered inactive.**
- **Someone who has made no QSOs in the last two years would be considered inactive.**
- **A person who operated the GOTA station as a generally inactive licensee last year would not be eligible to operate the GOTA station in the following Field Day.**

They make sense and conform to our tradition; therefore, these are the guidelines that we will use this year as well. If you are newly licensed and/ or meet the qualifications above, you have a special radio reserved just for you. It will be available for the entire 24-hour operating period, even at 4:00 AM. There will be a mentor/coach/Elmer available to help you get started, so plan to “get on the air.”

And, on the topic of 4:00 AM, this is a personal plea for two dozen of our most stalwart members to make a commitment to be at the site between the hours of 1:00 AM and 9:00 AM Sunday morning. We need to staff all of the HF stations, including an Elmer at the GOTA station. I don't need an eight-hour commitment, but a four-hour commitment would be appreciated. If it will help for the late crew, hearken back to your college days when staying out until 4:00 AM was the rule, not the exception, and be warmed by the fact that you won't have a hangover, or regrets, in the morning. For the early crew, imagine that it is the opening day of “deer season” and you are headed to your hunting camp to meet a bunch of buddies. The upside is that you won't have to sit by yourself until well after sunrise in a cold, damp, uncomfortable deer stand, but rather a cushy motor coach where the coffee is hot and “quiet” is discouraged. It is one weekend a year, and a chance to spend time with some of the best salt-of-the-earth people on the planet.

Finally, since we are going to have too much fun to cram it all into just two days, plan to come out after lunch on Friday, June 22 for a set-up event that will include antenna hoisting and other exciting activities. Specific plans are still being formed but be assured it will involve food either before or after.

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## ***HamCram Produces New Licensees / Chuck Catledge AE4CW***

On Saturday, April 28 at Brandon Hall School in Sandy Springs, 23 students earned new Technician and General class license privileges. For these students, HamCram culminated four weeks of self-study with a review of the exam material, an opportunity to ask questions and have points clarified, a practice exam and then the official FCC exam. Nine instructors from NFARL volunteered their time to help the students earn their Technician licenses or upgrades to General.

Here is the NFARL HamCram Honor Roll!

### **Technician Class**

- Nathan Bednar KK4IZK
- Marianne Buford KK4IZL
- Ronald Carolino KK4IZJ
- Deborah Carr KK4IZM
- Miguel Checa KK4IZF
- Stephen Durdin KK4IZI
- Gary Ellison KK4IZH
- Alan Horlick KK4JBT
- Scott Madison KK4IZG
- Patrick Turner KK4IZE
- James Vaught KK4IZN



### **General Class**

- Thomas Burns KK4ATY
- Jacob Caldwell KJ4VWL
- Kenton Chun KE4IEF
- George Clark KJ4SOR
- Mario DiCaro KJ4GAK
- Larry Hinson KG6INL
- James Remich KK4AUC
- Paul Ruszczuk KI4ADT
- Mark Schumann KK4FOF
- David Turner KE4SJO
- Alexander Williamson KI4IMZ
- Don Woodward KD4APP

Special thanks to Brandon Hall School and James Vaught who facilitated HamCram in their outstanding facility. Special thanks also go to the HamCram instructor team: Cathy Freeman KI4SBK, Chuck Catledge AE4CW, Dave Brackett AK4CL, Jeff Otterson N1KDO, Mack McCormick W4AX, Mike Cohen AD4MC, Ron Gill NV4U, Tom Koch W4UOC and Wes Lamboley W3WL. And to the NFARL VE team: Neil Foster N4FN, Roger Anders AA2HT, Steve Mays KS4KJ and Verne Fowler W8BLA. And extra special thanks to Karen Mallory AK4TR for handling lunch and refreshments!

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## **Tornado Drill Tests Preparedness / Wayne Chapman KG5WU**

NF ARES and NFARL members were among 11 hams (Wayne Chapman KG5WU, Tom Koch W4UOC, Mike Cohen AD4MC, Steve Southerland KK4DSW, Chuck Catledge AE4CW, Linda Schreiber KJ4NYT, Shelia Staton KD4NKE, Bill Reed K4YJI, Bill Cobb K4YJJ, Phil Wolf KK4EFN, Stuart Williams AK4EX) who helped provide communications for the CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Tornado Drill sponsored by Sandy Springs Fire/Rescue on April 21. The drill was held on the campus of St. Joseph's Hospital and included about 150 citizen volunteers who were made up to appear injured. Participating agencies included local fire, police, hospitals, EMS plus CERT teams from several neighboring counties.



**Tom Koch W4UOC (at left) was one of several NFARL members who provided communications during the Spring CERT Tornado Drill.**

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## **Triple Play Award – It's as Easy as 1, 2, 3 / Scott Straw KB4KBS**

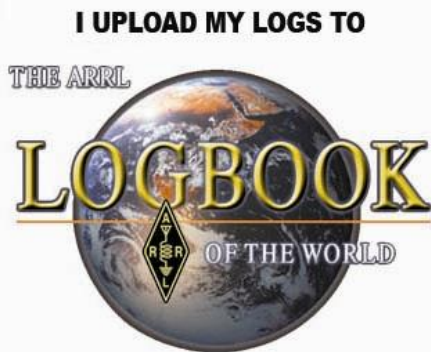
In July 2008, the American Radio Relay League created an award that would emphasize the well-roundedness of a ham who used the three types of transmission: CW, Phone, and Digital. To earn the Triple Play Award certificate, a ham needs to make contact with all 50 states three times, once in each mode.

It is an easy goal to achieve, and is a great source of fun and excitement as you track your progress and search for those elusive states using the various modes. If you can talk into a microphone, you can earn your WAS/SSB award. Don't be afraid to tune up and call "CQ Worked All States." Fellow hams scanning the band will be glad to pause long enough to give you a contact. Be sure to tell them you need a confirmation via Logbook of the World (LOTW). Don't fret if you get responses from "dupes" (folks from state you already have). The activity



of your two-way exchange has a way of churning up activity – like a feeding frenzy.

Getting WAS/DIG is as easy as JT65 and PSK-31. Both of these modes, especially JT65, are designed for low power and bad band conditions. If you can tune your radio to some semblance of resonance with anything metallic and antenna-shaped, and you tune to 7.076, 14.076 and 21.076, (set your rig to USB for all three) you should be able to hear the dulcet warble of JT65 signals. Download the software, from <http://sourceforge.net/projects/jt65-hf/>. Install it and connect the headphone out of your rig to the mic or line-in of your computer. Those tones will soon become intelligible messages. You'll need an interface to send the computer line-out to the radio's mic input so that you can transmit, but if you can decode JT65, I trust you'll be motivated appropriately. There are many software programs capable of decoding PSK-31 signals. The frequencies for PSK-31 are 7.035, 14.070, and 21.070. Contact an Elmer for suggestions on an interface specific to your situation.



Finally getting WAS/CW means having to understand Morse code. Sorta. There are numerous software programs (including DM-780 which is part of the Ham Radio Deluxe suite) that will decode the dits and dahs. These programs will also usually have the ability to send messages typed on a keyboard as CW characters. They may even have macros for pre-programmed messages. With some practice, you can send and receive the basic exchange info, 599 (or 5NN is a popular shortcut) your name, your QTH, etc., and never tap a telegraph key or wiggle your finger once.

One way to really kick-start your chase is to participate in contests that are focused on contacting other states. You DO NOT have to “be in the contest,” i.e. submit a log, to participate in these events.

Every year, the ARRL, under the auspices of the National Contest Journal, sponsors six events that are tailor-made for the TPA award chaser. They are called “North American QSO Parties,” or NAQP, and are comprised of winter and summer contests in each of the three contesting modes of CW, SSB, and RTTY. The summer dates for 2012 are July 21 for RTTY, August 4 for CW, and August 18 for SSB. The reason these contests are so attractive is that they are of short duration and everyone is restricted to 100 watts. Locally, they start at 2:00 PM and last 12 hours. As a single operator, you can work a maximum of 10 of the available hours.

Another popular contest, also sponsored by the ARRL, is the Sweepstakes. Again, the objective is to work as many states and Canadian provinces and territories, but there is not a 100W power limit. The Sweepstakes comes in two versions, CW and SSB. This is a long contest, lasting 30 hours, with an operational limit of 24 hours. The CW version starts on Friday night, November 3 at 5:00 PM local time. The SSB half starts Friday, November 17.

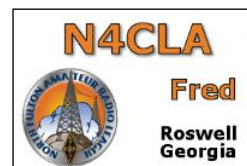
State QSO parties, such as the just-concluded Georgia QSO Party, are an excellent way of “mopping up” those states that are glaring holes in your register. The website <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/stateparties.html> is a helpful listing of these events.

Believe it or not, working all 50 states, even Hawaii and Alaska, is not as hard as you would think. There are lots of tools to help you. The only thing that stands in your way is you.

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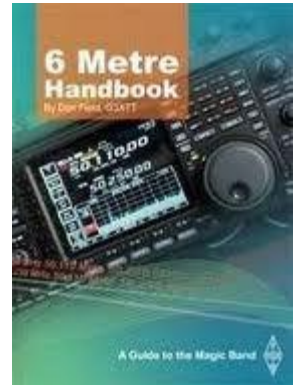
## Need a Name Badge?

Go to the [NFARL Mart](http://NFARL.Mart) and order one of these magnetic badges!



## ***Browsing the Library*** / *Keith Plossl K4KRX*

Six meters is known as the "magic band" because propagation appears magically and just as magically vanishes. One minute there may be no propagation and the next the band is full of signals. The *6 Metre Handbook*, written by well-known DXer and 6-meter enthusiast Don Field G3XTT, is the ideal guide. The handbook, published by the Radio Society of Great Britain, provides a detailed introduction for operators who have yet to experience the band, and is the perfect reference for regulars eagerly awaiting the return of the sunspots. If you think you might want to learn more about this interesting band, check out the handbook from our library. But be warned, 6 meters can be addictive!



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## ***NFARL Member Survey*** / *John Tramontanis N4TOL*

The NFARL member survey is active on the club webpage. The focus of the survey is primarily to learn of members' interest in certain programs and activities. So far, the results show the following topics as having the highest level of interest.

### **Meeting topics:**

Digital modes  
HF propagation  
Antennas for restricted space  
DX

### **Mid-Month Madness Activities:**

Logging and contest software  
Antennas  
Kit building  
Digital modes

Please let your voice be heard concerning your interests for programs and activities by visiting the club website at [www.nfarl.org](http://www.nfarl.org) to participate in the survey.



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## ***Public Service*** / *Dave Brackett AK4CL*

**Atlanta Hamfest,**

**Saturday, June 2, Jim Miller Park, 2245 Callaway Road, Marietta**

Volunteers needed to staff NFARL table from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. See Dave Brackett AK4CL at Hungry Hams or the May NFARL meeting or email Dave at [ak4cl@nfarl.org](mailto:ak4cl@nfarl.org).



## **Club Repeaters**

<b>145.470 (-)</b> EchoLink Node 560686 NF4GA-R	<b>100 Hz</b>	Sweat Mountain
<b>147.060 (+)</b> Primary ARES repeater	<b>100 Hz</b>	Roswell Water Tower
<b>224.620 (-)</b> Joint Venture with the MATPARC club	<b>100 Hz</b>	Sweat Mountain
<b>443.150 (+)</b>	<b>No Tone</b>	Roswell Water Tower
<b>444.475 (+)</b>	<b>100 Hz</b>	Sweat Mountain
<b>927.0125 (-)</b>	<b>146.2 Hz</b>	Sweat Mountain

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