



NFARL eNEWS

April 2014

www.nfarl.org

eNEWS is “what’s happening” in North Fulton and surrounding area! Check out each item and mark your calendar. Go to arrl.org for national news, but here is this month’s **North Fulton ARL eNEWS**.



Don't Miss the GA QSO Party April 12, 13! - *Details in this issue*

Summary of Upcoming Events and Dates

- **Every Sunday – NFARES net** - 8:30 PM - 147.06 MHz (+) PL 100
- **Every Monday – Tech Net** - 8:30 PM - 145.47 MHz (-) PL 100 - Check NFARL Nets [website](#) for “how to.”
- **Every Wednesday – Hungry Hams Lunch Bunch** - 11:15 AM - Slope’s BBQ, 34 East Crossville Road, Roswell
- **Every Saturday – Royal Order of the Olde Geezers (ROOG)** - 9:00 AM - Reveille Café, 2960 Shallowford Road, Marietta (at Sandy Plains and Shallowford). Everybody’s welcomed: You don’t have to be “old” or a “geezer” to join this breakfast get-together.
- **Third Tuesday – NFARL Club Meeting – April 15**, 7:30 PM - Alpharetta Adult Activity Center, 13450 Cogburn Road, Alpharetta. NFARL Library opens at 7:00 PM. **Steve Henke, W9SH**, will discuss open-source software for ham radio.
- **Fourth Tuesday – NFARL Executive Team Meeting – April 22**, 7:00 PM - Panera Bread, 1195 Woodstock Road, Roswell. Open to NFARL club members.
- **Southeastern VHF Society 2014 Annual Conference – April 25-26** - Hilton Atlanta Northeast, 5993 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Norcross. For details, check the [Southeastern VHF Society website](#).
- **Spring Technician HamCram** – Saturday, **April 26**, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM - Brandon Hall School, 1701 Brandon Hall Drive, Sandy Springs.
- **Second Saturday – VE Testing Session – May 10**, 10:00 AM - Alpharetta Adult Activity Center, 13450 Cogburn Road, Alpharetta
- **Second Tuesday – NFARES meeting – May 13**, 7:00 PM with dinner at 5:55 PM at the Brandon Hall School, 1701 Brandon Hall Drive, Sandy Springs. Talk-in station on 147.06 Repeater

Program Update / Walt Woron, KJ4HE

Steve Henke, W9SH, will speak at our April meeting about his current project, which involves open source interoperability for amateur radio. Steve was first licensed in Indianapolis before moving to the Atlanta area. He has worked in a technical and business capacity for several well-known wired and wireless communications companies and is currently employed by a VoIP startup in the Advanced Technology Development Center at Georgia Tech. He provides the free open source software Asterisk® /XIPAR Radio Over IP package and iaxRPT PTT client to the amateur radio community and will discuss its origins and demonstrate its operation.



The Xelatec XIPAR project combines the Asterisk® VoIP PBX with radio interface software and hardware that provides the following for amateur radio stations and systems:

- A full function multisite linking repeater controller with touch-tone command and control;
- Autopatch, featuring reverse call and VOX operation;
- Multiple CTCSS decode/encode functions;
- Asterisk® VoIP private branch telephone exchange with voice mail and announcements;
- Contact closure telemetry and announcements;
- Non-proprietary software and hardware based on the open source Linux operating system; and
- A fully configurable and programmable communications solution.

Please join us on Tuesday, April 15, at 7:30 P.M., for Steve's interesting and informative presentation on this cutting-edge aspect of ham radio.

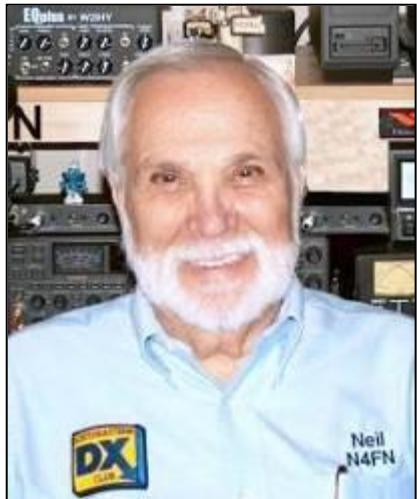
President's Corner / Neil Foster, N4FN

On March 29, NFARL had a major presence at the Atlanta Science Festival at Centennial Olympic Park in downtown Atlanta. In conversation with **Martha Muir, W4MSA**, it was a huge success with great participation from those who were visitors; more on that from Martha elsewhere in this newsletter.

Our next big event will be the Georgia QSO Party on April 12-13. Information for joining in this fun event, drawing participants from many states and countries, can be found in this newsletter as well as at the [GQP website](#). I encourage all members to participate.

There are two 10-hour sessions and, hopefully, all 159 counties will be represented. Join in the fun and see if you capture one of the beautiful plaques or certificates.

There are several dedicated GQP logging programs available, including one written by our own **Chaz Cone, W4GKF**, which he has made available at no charge on [his website](#), or you can [email him](#). GQPLOG works in a command window in all versions of Windows (except 64-bit Windows 7) and features a simple, but efficient interface which is quick and easy to use. It does NOT provide rig control but it is a great program, and it is a freebee (yes, Virginia, hams love FREE). Another logging option is **N3FJP**'s GA State QSO Party Program 2.01. Low Cost: N3FJP has a set of programs costing as little as \$8.99 for a single QSO party. The GQP logger is available as an individual program or part of the more comprehensive suite of programs. Another option is WinGQP, a free logger written by Marietta's **Mike Condon, NE4S**. WinGQP is



Windows-based, supports WinKey2 on CW, works in-state, out-of-state, DX users, and more. Rovers can change counties on the fly. There are other programs, even a new one for Mac aficionados, on the GQP site.

Toward the end of the month, NFARL will hold a HamCram session at Brandon Hall School on April 26. There will be an ARRL testing session following the final review. **Bill Weathers, K4WSW**, indicates he has a "sold-out" registration, standing room only. Also, in the works is a teacher workshop hosted by Mill Springs Academy. It is for educators interested in forming a ham radio program at their respective schools.

The week before the May meeting, members will start making the annual pilgrimage to Dayton, Ohio, for the "granddaddy" of hamfests, the [Dayton Hamvention](#). As I mentioned at the last meeting, if you go to Dayton looking for a ham radio-related item and you cannot find it, one of several things is a given: 1. If you cannot find it, it never existed, 2. If it did exist, you cannot afford it, and 3. You really did not need it anyway! That item injected ... in past years, we had a listing of those who were attending from NFARL along with cell phone numbers. I would like to see that continued and perhaps take it a step further. If there is/are a particular item(s) you are looking for, send [me an email](#), and I will start a list. This way, as huge as the boneyard at Dayton is, it is easy to miss something. For the QRP enthusiasts, there is the [Four Days in May](#) get-together (FDIM), held by QRP ARCI in conjunction with Dayton.

As many of you may already know, our neighbors at the Kenneehoochee ARC lost their repeater site. So if you hear a new voice, welcome them to our repeater family while they are looking for a new permanent site.

The March program presented by **Gary Bush, W6GB**, on the restoration of old equipment was a great one. Gary is a great humorist and very knowledgeable. Finally, at the April 15 meeting, we will have a presentation by **Steve Henke, W9SH**, on "Open Source Software for IP Communication." See you there!

The Georgia QSO Party



It's Party Time for Georgia! / John Tramontanis, N4TOL

The 53rd running of the Georgia QSO Party (GQP) will take place on April 12-13, spanning two operating periods: 1800 UTC (2:00 PM EDT) Saturday until 0359 UTC (11:59 PM EDT) Sunday and 1400 UTC (10:00 AM EDT) to 2359 UTC (7:59 PM EDT) on Sunday.

NFARL encourages all members to participate in this event.

This is your chance to "be the DX." It is a real opportunity to practice "running," calling CQ and letting them come to you. From my perspective, this is the most enjoyable contest of the year, as Georgia stations are the "hunted." Also, it is always exciting and surprising to see what DX, stateside, and Georgia stations (sometimes familiar call signs) will come back to your call.

There will be special certificates awarded to all club members for participation in the contest and also certificates awarded for key accomplishments in select categories.

Please visit the [contest website](#) for details.

The Kennehoochee and Atlanta Radio Club Hamfest will be held on Saturday, June 7, from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. NFARL will have a club table at the event. All are invited to help staff the table or just come visit with friends. For more info, check out the [hamfest website](#).

Field Day
2014 will be
held
Saturday,



June 28, to Sunday, June 29. More details regarding the club's plans can be found elsewhere in this newsletter. Info from ARRL can be found [here](#).

Field Day 2014 Closing In on Us / John Kludt, K4SQC

The fourth full weekend in June (28-29) may seem a long way away, but for something as complex as ARRL Field Day, it is a lot closer than you think.

Chuck Catledge, AE4CW, and Wes Lamboley, W3WL, continue their work on a sophisticated antenna system that will allow two rigs to use the same beam at the same time.

Joe Camilli, N7QPP, has the hardware to begin to network the logging program to allow the “third” station to go after CW or Phone contacts as conditions dictate.

Jim Stafford, W4QO, has the CW station in hand. Chuck has primary responsibility for the phone station and Wes is leading up the team on the “third” station.

GOTA will operate under the leadership of **Bill Weathers, K4WSW,** and **Mark Schumann, KK4FOF.** If you have been licensed in the past year, any time since June 2013, if you have been off the air for “an extended period of time” (more than three years is the NFARL definition) or maybe you don’t even have a license, the GOTA (Get On The Air) station is just for you. Bill and Mark have done an excellent job of getting people into the swing of the event in the past. So, please, drop by and bring a friend – they can operate as well!

There is still a lot to do and we are looking for volunteers.



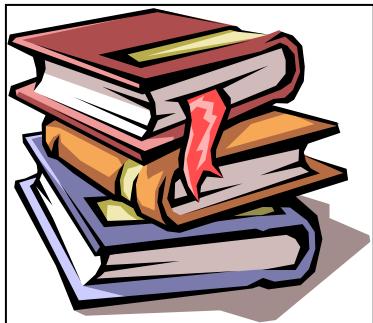
- **Bonus Point Captain:** There are a number of “bonus points” to be had, including many that center around messages. There is an ARRL FD bulletin to be copied, either on phone, CW, RTTY or PSK. A message to the section manager is good for extra points. One hundred points can be had if we handle 10 messages through the NTS system. If this sounds like something you would be interested in, look me up at the club meeting
- **Logistics Chief:** Those stations in the upper parking lot will need shelters. Gasoline will be required for the generators. Tower trailers need to be towed to the site and returned. Signs need to be put up and taken down. The Logistics Chief doesn’t need to do all of this, but does need to assemble a crew to make sure the work gets done.
- **VHF Band Captain:** We are looking for someone with an interest and skills in VHF, especially 6 meters, to run this operation. Rig (FT-2000), antenna, rotor and tower will be provided. We need a leader and a crew of operators to get just as many of these bonus points as we can.

- **Satellite Band Captain:** We will do the satellites again. The station will be provided but again we need a leader and a crew to make the contacts. As many of you know, there is an AMSAT Field Day that runs concurrent with the ARRL Field Day. We would like to see NFARL well up on the AMSAT Leader Board.

There are lots of opportunities to play radio on Field Day. We will be looking for you at the April meeting or you can drop a line [here](#).

Changes Coming for NFARL Library / Keith Plossl, K4KRX

The NFARL library is being reorganized so that one person isn't doing all the work. NFARL is trying to spread the load and we are planning an outreach program for our youth. Library volunteers are being recruited so any volunteer can open the library, fill out the loan / return forms and add and label new items so new resources become available more quickly and easily. The plan is to have any member of the staff be able to do any task, including writing monthly newsletter articles.



NFARL youth may know the library exists but they apparently have little information on what to use it for, or what it contains. We want to make it easier for young people to know what resources are available so they know where to find information on specific topics, such as building simple wire antennas and so forth. Stay tuned as we address these issues.

Repeater Reminders

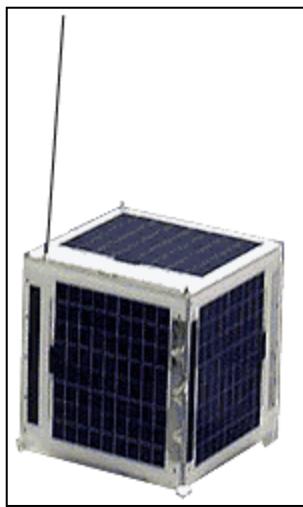
Courteous and legal use of a repeater is the responsibility of every amateur radio operator.

Emergency use of a repeater always takes precedence over all other use.



Satellites in the Park / John Kludt, K4SQC

Every year about this time, the Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society (the Dayton Hamvention 2014 Club of the Year) heads to Bogan Park in Buford, with their HTs, satellite antennas, big ground stations, what-have- you, for a morning of "Satellites in the Park." This is in no way a competitive event, rather, it is a time for those interested in Orbiting Satellites Carrying Amateur Radio (OSCAR) to get together, share ideas, "shoot some birds" (and maybe a little bull) and generally have a good time.



Hal Collier, W4IGE, the organizer of the event, has invited NFARL to join the party. The fun begins on Saturday, May 3, at 9:00 AM and wraps up around 1:30 PM. GARS will be setting up their main station and will have a generator if you need 110 volts. A number of HTs are expected to be in attendance. I will be there with a pair of FT-817s (an FT-1634!?!?) and an Arrow to test working SSB and CW with the FT-817 pair. We know they work on the FM birds: This is an opportunity to test them with the linear transponders.

If you would like to ring out your HT on the satellites, be there. If you have a more elaborate station you would like to test, be there. If you just want to be around a lot of energy directed at satellites and amateur radio, be there.

Portable Set-Up Gets the Job Done / Bill Weathers, K4WSW

Having limited time to operate during the first few months this year, I decided, with encouragement from **Mark Schumann, KK4FOF**, to take my "go radio" with me the last weekend of March to Statesboro. My son, a senior at Georgia Southern University, had a couple of lacrosse games that weekend, so I was hoping to have some time to kill on Saturday after eating, grocery shopping, etc., to attempt a few QSOs during the CQ WPX contest. Mark reminded me that [on my QRZ.com page](#), my "go radio" consisted of a Yaesu FT-897 with ATAS-120. What excuse did I have? None.

So late Saturday, I was ready to operate in my Chevrolet Tahoe in the Hampton Inn parking lot ... facing West. With my radio and Dell laptop running on a 35aH battery, I sent KK4FOF a text message to see if he was working the contest, checked the bands and determined 10 meters was open. I started at the bottom of the band at 28.300 MHz and tuned up towards 28.600 MHz. My first contact was Colombia, followed by Martinique, Czech Republic, Azores,



Canada, Wales and U.S. Virgin Islands in the first 15 minutes. I was really pleased, especially since my Yaesu ATAS-120 antenna is only 1 meter off the ground and mounted on the brush guard on my Tahoe 4x4. For those unfamiliar, the ATAS-120 is a tunable antenna of the screwdriver variety and can be set to auto-tune the FT-897 on 7, 14, 21, 28, 50, 144 and 430 MHz

As I continued, the next 15 minutes brought in Argentina, Brazil, the Canary Islands, Curacao and a few U.S. stations. The band is expanding and I am looking for DX stations. I continue tuning up the band, attempting other contacts and skipping many too, since I like to focus on making as many unique entity contacts in the least number of attempts. I was extremely pleased and surprised by the propagation: Barbados, Chile, Peru, Slovenia, Germany, Netherlands, Paraguay and Cape Verde. Now it got really interesting as the bands opened up to the West. I worked Hawaii and then was very surprised to work Japan not once but three times as my VFO approached 28.700. I was blown away by now and very pleased with my "go radio" set-up reaching over 6,500 miles to Japan. I then added El Salvador, Uruguay and Newfoundland along the way until it was time to shut down and get ready for dinner.

To summarize the limited operating time: In two hours, I made 40 contacts across 24 unique countries, using a simple 100-watt radio with an antenna mounted on my vehicle's brush guard. It was an absolutely amazing experience, making this great big world smaller. I hope my story will encourage hams, new and seasoned, to always consider the possibilities of operating under a variety of conditions.



Opening Up a World of Fun



Welcome **Sammy Mishkin, KK4WPI**, to the world outside of Cumming. Thanks to a loaner radio and a 40-meter antenna installed by **Jim Stafford, W4QO**, Sammy now can reach distances far beyond Cumming without the use of a repeater. Sammy, an ACE student at Mill Springs Academy, was the first student to fully embrace CW. Listen out for him!

Radio Scores Big at Science Expo / Martha Muir, W4MSA

On Saturday, March 29, the Georgia Section of ARRL hosted a booth at the Atlanta Science Festival Exploration Expo, the grand finale event of a weeklong celebration of STEM (science, technology, electronics, and math) activities. More than one hundred

booths filled Hall 3 of the Georgia World Congress Center in downtown Atlanta, featuring nearly every type of STEM activity available. Among the disease detectives, oobleck, slime, and bouncy ball creating directors, math modeling bubble makers, and insect devouring ‘killer’ plant botanists, amateur radio was there to generate interest for our STEM-rich activity. An estimated 16,000 visitors attended the Expo, which was moved indoors from Centennial Olympic Park due to the poor weather.



Jim Stafford, W4QO, sends sparks a-flying with the Wimshurst Static Machine.

cooperative effort between the North Fulton Amateur Radio League and the Southeastern DX Club. From the moment the doors opened until the lights were dimmed at closing time, there were visitors at the booth. Some were quite young, some at the other end of the age spectrum, with many in between. Yes, the activities would have been far more ‘radio-centric’ if they had been held outside as originally planned, but **John Kludt, K4SQC**, **Norm Schklar, WA4ZXV**, **Jim Stafford, W4QO**, **Wes Lambole, W3WL**, and **Mike Weathers, ND4V**, pulled together a great last-minute Plan B. Jim took over for Wes at the Wimshurst Static Machine, sparking interest in our booth and entertaining kids. Georgia Section Manager **Gene Clark, W4AYK**, took over this position when Jim had to leave. The booth was usually jammed full of folks who were guided into the booth to watch their voice on an oscilloscope, see a Tesla coil in action, watch the video of last fall’s ARISS Radio Contact at Mill Springs Academy, track satellites as they passed over Atlanta, and spell their name out in Morse code. I spoke with teachers and students of great teachers about supplementing their classroom activities with amateur radio.

The Georgia ARRL Section booth received financial support from HamJam, a



Wes Lambole, W3WL, was among NFARL members helping staff the exhibits. Photos by Martha Muir, W4MSA

"I didn't know they still used Morse code" was one comment made by a guest entering the booth (but not as she left). Two visitors from New Hampshire who stopped by the Expo at the request of their 7-year-old son who wanted to touch a brain (offered in another booth) are hams who were glad to see amateur radio appropriately displayed at this science-rich venue. Visitors who had been hams "years ago" were excited to talk with current hams about how to get involved with the activity again. Steps needed to get a license and the different specialty interest areas of amateur radio were presented to our curious visitors. Connections were made with booth presenters from Agnes Scott College who recently had a number of folks there earn their license.

Our booth was a beehive of activity all day. We tantalized the inquisitive. We generated smiles and laughs with the kids. We made connections with present and future hams.

In conclusion, I wrote in my description about amateur radio's participation at the Expo: Should 'we' do this again next year? I don't care who 'we' are, the answer is YES! While our booth attracted and entertained the youngest visitors like I suspect all the other booths did, we also reached the older students, including several college students who came by, as well as parents and grandparents. Some found out about radio for the first time, while some renewed an old or smoldering interest. Some, like the New Hampshire folks, agreed amateur radio is the perfect fit for an exhibition like this.

NFARL to Hold Workshop for Teachers



Mike Cohen, AD4MC, works with a Mill Springs Academy student.

Do you know a science, math, technology, and/or gifted teacher who might be interested in using amateur radio in the classroom? Let them know about the NFARL workshop titled "Enriching Your STEM Curriculum with Ham Radio" that will be held at Mill Springs Academy on May 3.

STEM stands for science, technology, electronics, and math. Topics to be covered at this workshop include Electricity is Magnetic!; Fun with Antennas; Geometry of Propagation; Digital and Voice Transmissions; Transmitting and Receiving Signals from Satellites; and resources for teachers.

Space is limited. For more information and application information, interested teachers should contact [Martha Muir, W4MSA](#).

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Club Repeaters

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

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