



North Fulton Amateur Radio League NFARL eNEWS

April 2017

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www.nfarl.org



The Georgia QSO Party is in the Books!

Turn in your scores!

The bands were alive and buzzing with activity last weekend with the 57th running of the Georgia QSO Party. The talk of great scores and enthusiastic feedback from many NFARL operators would lead one to believe that the lull in the solar cycle was on spring break!!

The offer of the "Spell NFARL" certificate in the GQP appears to have been quite a success in generating activity in the contest. Already we are receiving requests for the "Spell NFARL" certificates, and most are from stations outside of Georgia.

Our 1x1 stations racked up some impressive scores:

N4N - 199,155 Rovers, W5JR, WK4U, KK4VQJ
N4F - 42,675 W4QO - QRP
N4A - 89,726 N4TOL
N4R - 48,756 K4BB, K4YJI, K4YJJ
N4L - 148,372 AC4PA, AE4CW

A total of 528,684 points !!!!!

Recognition to Jim Stafford, W4QO, and Daryl Young, K4RGK for helping to make the "Spell NFARL" event a success. Although the contest has passed, the fun will continue.

Be sure to submit your logs to the GQP by May 15 and to indicate your club affiliation with the North Fulton Amateur Radio League. See details and instructions for GQP log submission under the rules tab at georgiagsoparty.org. Also, after sending your log to the GQP, please be sure to submit your GQP data to NFARL to qualify for the special NFARL awards/certificates. Please click on the Georgia QSO Party tab at NFARL.org for details.

Last year, club members were recognized for key accomplishments in select categories and the highly coveted NFARL GQP certificates were awarded to many operators.

Also, check your logs to see if you worked all 5 of the 1x1 NFARL stations for the new certificate. Send those details to n4tol@arrl.net.

So be sure to submit your scores to be eligible for a NFARL award.

73 *John Tramontanis* N4TOL

NFARL Upcoming Events and Dates

- **Every Sunday — NFARES net** - 8:30 PM - 147.06 MHz (+) PL 100
All licensed Hams are welcome, you do not need to be an ARES member!
- **Every Monday — Tech Talk** - 8:30 PM - 145.47 MHz (-) PL 100
NFARL's flagship technical based "non check-in" net. The net is always better when using the web based chat room but Internet is not required to join the net. 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 Thursday — YL Net** – 8:00 PM - 145.47 MHz (-) PL 100
Check NFARL Nets [website](#) for "how to."
OM's (guys) are welcome to listen in to this YL net.
Great opportunity to get your YL's on the radio!
- **Every Saturday — Royal Order of the Olde Geezers (ROOG) Lodge No. 1**
9:00 AM - Reveille Café, 2960 Shallowford Road, Marietta (at Sandy Plains and Shallowford). Everyone is welcome: You don't have to be "old" or a "geezer" to join this breakfast get-together.
- **Second Tuesday — NFARES Meeting** - 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Fellowship Bible Church, 480 W. Crossville Road, Roswell.
Check [NFARES.net](#) for more information.
- **Third Tuesday — NFARL Club Meeting** - **April 18, 2017**, 7:30 PM.
Pre-meeting activities begin at 7:00PM.
Location: [Alpharetta Adult Activity Center at North Park](#)
13450 Cogburn Road, Alpharetta, GA 30004
April Programs: Chuck Catledge, AE4CW, presents:
"DXCC & WAS in 9 Days - and the Antennas that Made it Happen".
and
"Chuck & Tim's Adventure to PJ2T"
- **Fourth Tuesday – NFARL Executive Team Meeting**
April 25th, 2017, 7:00 PM
Location: [Arbor Terrace at Crabapple](#)
12200 Crabapple Road, Alpharetta, GA 30004
Meetings are open to all NFARL members. Space is available on a first arrival basis. Please contact the [President](#) to ensure available space.

One Day US Island Get Away / Terry Joyner, W4YBV

Saturday May 13th is the US Island program's One Day Get-A-Way event. This is one of the planned outings each year for the US Island program that is lots of fun.

This is not a contest, just radio fun!

Times of operations are 0000 UTC through 2359 UTC Friday evening to Saturday Evening. Please see the [US Islands calendar](#) for details. I will have a club station NF4GA set up on Indian Island GA025L out at Stone Mountain all day on Saturday. Please come out and join us or try to work us on 40-M, 7.260 or 20-M, 14.260. Anyone wanting to take part in this event please contact me at 770-993-8502.

If you want to take part in the Get-A-Way and set up a station here are additional Islands in the Atlanta area.

- ◆ Powers Island, GA026R This is a walk on island only.
- ◆ Pine Island, GA031L

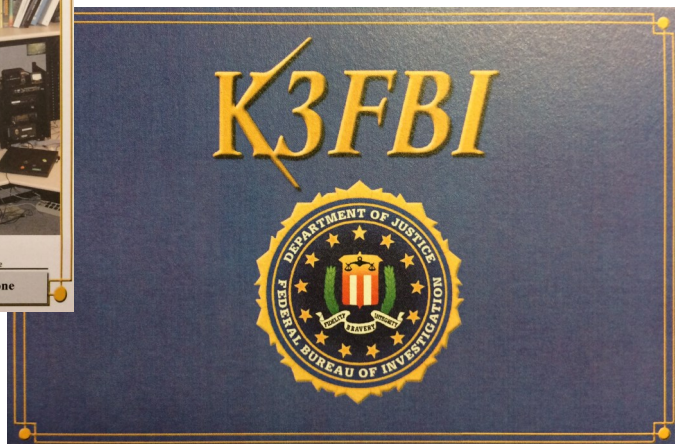
Special Event Stations / Terry Joyner, W4YBV

FBI special event station Certificate and QSL card!

Over the years one of the things I love about ham radio is working special event stations giving out great certificates and QSL's to put on my walls. Below is just one of the certificates that I have received over the years. It is from the FBI Amateur Radio Association located in Helena, Montana.

You will find K3FBI on the air during School Club Round ups, Police week and Virginia Sheriff Dare graduation week.

Sending a 9" x 12" SASE and \$1.25 for postage gets you this great FBI Certificate and FBI QSL card. Look for K3FBI on the air all year.



NF4GA/3 On The Air from DC / Scott Straw, KB4KBS

I was sent on an assignment to Rosslyn, Virginia, a business district that is technically in Arlington. It is just north of the Arlington Memorial Cemetery and the United States Marine Corp War Memorial (also known as the Iwo Jima Memorial). It was a somber moment each morning and afternoon as I drove up and down the George Washington Expressway to Alexandria, Virginia, and passed all of those white headstones. I also passed the Pentagon each day as well as Ronald Reagan International Airport.

I was reminded that Terry Joyner, W4YBV, mentioned the U. S. Islands program and the North Fulton Amateur Radio League's "Forty islands for our Fortieth Anniversary" program at the February meeting so I got to looking at the US Islands program web site and discovered that I traversed one of the two listed islands for Washington, D.C. in the Potomac River every day during my commute and that a second island was easily accessible as well. I contacted Terry and we agreed that this would be a great event for using the club call sign, NF4GA (/3). I was fortunate to have my Ham Radio gear with me because I had participated as a rover in the North Carolina and South Carolina QSO Parties on my drive from Atlanta to Washington a few weeks earlier.

I spoke to my wife who was with me, and is my driver for my rover efforts, and she agreed that we would take one Sunday afternoon and go to both of the islands. We even did a dry run on Saturday because we had discovered that navigating around Washington D.C. is never easy. We successfully navigated to the two locations and scouted out places to park and operate from. We were set to go for the next day.

The first Island was Columbia Island (USI # DC001R). This island is on the western side of the Potomac River and has a marina where we set up and operated. We could see the Pentagon from the west side of the Island and on the east side of the island (only assessable by bicycle or on foot by way of a tunnel under the George Washington Parkway) we could see the Washington Monument as well as the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials. It was on the southeast side of the Island that the Navy-Merchant Marine Memorial is located, paying tribute to the men who gave their lives at sea during World War One.

The second island, East Potomac Park Island (USI# DC002R) is where the Jefferson Memorial is located. It is well connected by bridges and it can be difficult to discern that it is an island, but it truly is. The Jefferson Memorial is at the North end of the island and there is a golf course at the south end. It was teeming with visitors to the memorial as well as residents enjoying the beautiful weather by walking, jogging, biking, and picnicking on this gorgeous Sunday afternoon.

The operation got off to a great start as we began on 20 meters and within the first ten minutes of calling CQ has logged both Scotland and Italy. Things stayed fairly busy with contacts that rolled in from across the US and Canada. After an hour, and with 22 contacts in the log, we switched to 40 meters and after another hour, we had added 20 more call signs to the log. We had set a cap of four and a half hours for the outing and we were able to move to the second location in only 25 or so minutes. By the time we got back on the air about thirty-five or forty minutes had lapsed. We started out on 40 meters and hoped to work some of the club members back in Georgia. Sadly, during those repositioning minutes the band began to fill with afternoon rag-chew nets, a couple of state QSO Parties and I suspect that something might have happened

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with my antenna or feedline while tearing down and setting up. Whatever the cause, we were only able to log 14 contacts across 45 minutes of calling CQ and many of the contacts were really difficult to pull out of the noise and QRM. While the first island had been a great pleasure with lots of contacts, the second island was "no bueno". After an hour we cut the excursion short, packed up and headed back to the hotel.

In the 55 QSOs, there were four countries: Scotland, Italy, Canada and the United States. We worked 24 different states, with Georgia ringing in the most QSOs with 10. The other states were AZ, CA, FL, IA, IN (2), KY (2), LA (3), MA (2), MI, MN (4), MO (2), MS, NC (2), NE (2), NH, NY (2), OH, SC, TX (2), UT, VA (2), WI, and WV. I also had the provinces of Manitoba and Ontario (5) in my log.

My Yaesu FT-450D was able to transmit at 75W without negative repercussions to the radio, laptop, or vehicle. I used a mono band Ham Stick antenna on a triple magnet mount for both 20M and 40M. My reliable trunk-lip mount developed some issues that were later diagnosed as a broken center conductor at the connector. I was fortunate I threw in the mag-mount as a back-up. I will hopefully get to another island or two before the end of the year, and now that I have some experience, will hopefully have the same or better success.

How ROOG Came To Be / Neil Foster, N4FN

A number of North Fulton folks asked how ROOG came to be an integral part of NFARL and an official event. It started some years ago with 6 members: Walt Woron, Jim Smith, Ian Kahn, Steve Knittel and Neil Foster.

Originally we met at the now defunct Nicky's Diner. We soon outgrew the diner and at the suggestion of Walt Woron we moved to Reveille Café, a great place.

Walt even designed the logo attached to meeting reminders. We turned down wearing the Fez at soirees. Some of us still have our passports with the fez visa displayed. Adding a bit of whimsy we decided to be known as Lodge Number 1.

Reveille sets aside the alcove for our weekly soiree and not only do they have great food but also great service. A decision was made to start our get together at 9:00 AM and we wait until most of the regular members are present to order breakfast. Some of us may arrive a bit early (I normally do) to make sure we have adequate tables. If not we add the tables to accommodate all who attend.

So there you have the history of this great NFARL event. We have no dues, no minutes, no officers, and no formality other than great NFARL camaraderie. We do have a list of geezers for fun. For example Walt is OG-2 and Ian not being an "olde" geezer is YG-1 (Young Geezer). We also have one International Geezer, Vito Leo ON6VL, known as OG-22.

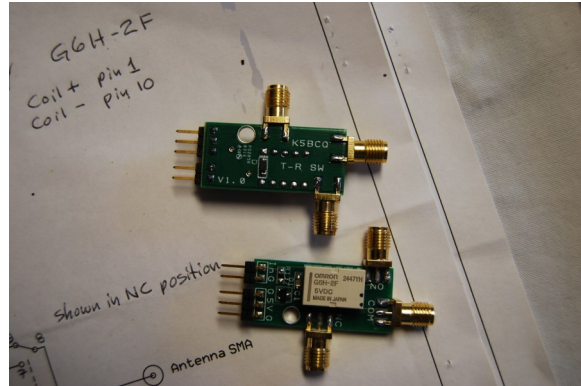
So now you know how we came about.

Irreverently submitted OG-1 (Kenobi) aka N4FN

Testing the K5BCQ T/R Switch / Bob Freeman, KI4SBL

Building an amateur radio satellite ground station can be expensive. I am always on the lookout for low cost components to use in satellite work in order to keep total ground station costs low. I recently ran across a low cost Transmit/Receive (T/R) Switch Kit and decided to check it out. The antenna applications being considered were either T/R operation or antenna polarization switching.

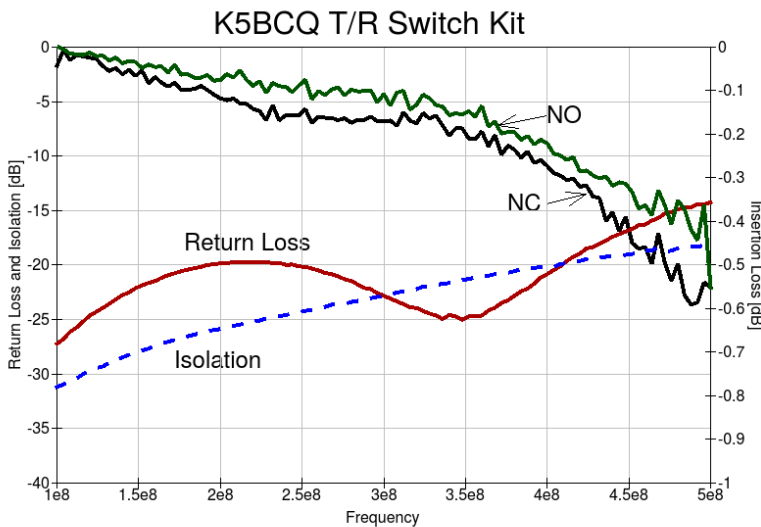
This article presents information and measurement results on the **K5BCQ T/R Switch Kit #24** found at <http://www.gsl.net/k5bcq/Kits/Kits.html>. A photograph of the two kits I ordered and assembled is shown here.



The T/R Switch Kit is probably the simplest kit of several listed for sale at the web link above. The \$10 cost and small size of the kit is attractive when compared to coaxial switched relays. Also, the 5V power and control voltages offers the potential for compatibility with tracking control software, like SatPC32. The relay used in the kit is not a latching type unit; some may consider this undesirable.

Assembly of the unit was straightforward. While there are some SMD components, there are so few components overall that one can't get in too much trouble!

Measurements were made using the DG8SAQ VNWA (http://sdr-kits.net/NWA3_Description.html) over a frequency range from 100 MHz to 500 MHz. This is a range sufficient to cover VHF and UHF bands used on most amateur radio satellites.



A graph of measurement results for one of the two kits is shown left. The second unit was measured and found to be quite similar.

The graph shows reasonable Return Loss performance over the entire frequency band. Similarly, the Insertion Loss is suitable for use, especially at 2meters. The Isolation performance, at only 20dB to 30dB, may not be sufficient to protect a sensitive receiver. For example, a 10W transmit signal at UHF would still place 100mW or +20dBm on the receiver input. That **might** be okay but one would have to verify this from the receiver specification.

On the other hand, the switch may serve well as an antenna polarization switch. The insertion loss is not too bad, even at the UHF frequency, and the >20dB Isolation is sufficient to maintain antenna radiation pattern performance.

All in all, the kit build was a fun little project and one more chapter in the quest for a low cost satellite ground station. If there are questions, corrections, or suggestions, please contact the author. Until then, have fun!

Bob, KI4SBL

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Club Repeaters

Frequency—Description	P.L. Tone	Location
145.470 (-) EchoLink Node 56086 NF4GA-R	100 Hz	Sweat Mountain
147.060 (+) Primary ARES Repeater	100 Hz	Roswell Water Tower
224.620 (-) Joint Venture with MATPARC	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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