



## ***NFARL eNEWS***

### ***February 2013***

[www.nfarl.org](http://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](http://arrl.org) for national news, but here is this month's **North Fulton ARL eNEWS**.



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

- **Every Wednesday** – Hungry Hams Lunch Bunch – 11:15 AM – Slope's BBQ, 34 East Crossville Road, Roswell
- **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](http://www.nfarl.org) for "how to"
- **Second Tuesday** – **NFARES meeting** – February 12, 7:00 PM – Brandon Hall School, 1701 Brandon Hall Drive, Sandy Springs
- **Third Tuesday** – **NFARL club meeting** – February 19, 7:30 PM – Alpharetta Adult Activity Center, 13450 Cogburn Road, Alpharetta. Learn everything you need to know to give EchoLink a try (if you haven't already!)
- **Mid-Month Madness** – February 23 – [Dalton Hamfest](http://www.daltonhamfest.com), North Georgia Fairgrounds, 500 Legion Road, Dalton. 8:00 AM (boneyard opens at 7:00 AM) to 2:30 PM (grand prize drawing). Dalton kicks off the hamfest season for Georgia and many NFARL members attend this annual event. \$5 admission.
- **VE Testing Session** – Saturday, February 9 – 10:00 AM – Alpharetta Adult Activity Center

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### ***Program Update*** / *Joe Camilli, N7QPP*

If you don't have a clue what EchoLink is all about, our February meeting should answer your questions. Hint: It involves radio and computers!



Mike Roden, W5JR, and I will introduce you to this interesting and useful aspect of amateur radio.

Looking ahead, our March meeting, presented by Kevin King, KC6OVD, will focus on DRM for HAMS, and in April, club member Christian Kutzt, AK4VV, will explain Summits on the Air in Georgia.

Should anyone have an idea for a future program, please [drop me an email](mailto:joecamilli@nfarl.org) or speak to me at the next meeting.

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## **President's Corner / John Kludt, K4SQC**

As much as we complain about the cold here in Georgia, it wasn't that many years ago that we were living in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and I was under the call N9ENG. Now, up there cold can be really cold and I learned some very important things. Things like 40 degrees below zero is the point at



which one need not specify Fahrenheit or Centigrade as it is the place the two scales cross. It is also the point at which rotators don't rotate and coax doesn't bend very well. And working outside without gloves is just plain dangerous! I will take "Georgia cold" any day, any time.

For those of you who could not attend, Don Nesbitt, N4HH, did a great presentation on the [VK9HR DXpedition](#) to Lord Howe Island. Lord Howe is off the eastern coast of Australia and this DXpedition team had to "rough it" in a very nice hotel that was empty in the off-season. The comparison at the end of the presentation between the Lord Howe and [HK0NA Malpelo](#) adventures was pretty amusing: Driving to the station location versus strapped into a climbing harness and clambering over the rocks, that kind of thing. Thank you, Don, for a very interesting and informative program.

At the last meeting we mentioned the new FM-only category in the ARRL January VHF contest. While many of you participated I do want to mention two NFARL members for making an extra effort. First I want to recognize Claire McCarthy, KK4JJT, who did almost all of the FM work at the [Fourlanders](#) contest site, using the call W4NH. Seems a YL voice is always worth another 3 db. W4NH was on FM at the top of the hour during both Saturday and Sunday and Claire did a great job. We were also pleasantly surprised to hear NFARL member Aaron Melton, KK4LOV, on during the contest. Not sure if Aaron was a rover or mountain topping but when W4NH worked him he was on Sweat Mountain. Aaron is a relatively new ham and it is great to see a "newbie" give contesting a shot.

In addition to the usual NFARL activities in February, the hamfest season in Georgia kicks off with the Dalton Hamfest on the 23rd. This is always a fun event as it draws not only Georgia folks, but also amateur radio operators from Tennessee and the Carolinas. If you have never been, it can be cold or wet or both, so dress accordingly. Last year was warm and sunny, so "layers" is probably the way to go. One of the club members has reserved a table at the indoor flea market and is willing to share the space and the sales duties, so if you are interested in moving some of your own treasures out of the shack, [contact me](#).

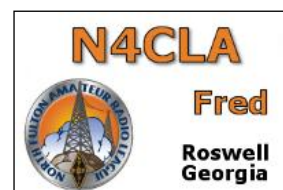
One last word on the February program is in order. Back in October we were surprised at the number of hands that went up when we asked if folks would like to learn more about EchoLink. Joe Camilli, N7QPP, and Mike Roden, W5JR, have agreed to do a presentation on that very subject. They will go over the three major ways we use EchoLink – on the repeater, from home with a computer and on a smartphone or handheld device.

73 and see you at the meeting!

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## **Need a Name Badge?**

Go to the [NFARL Mart](#) and order one of these magnetic badges!



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## **Mark Your Calendar: Georgia QSO Party April 13-14**

The weekend of April 13-14 is the annual [Georgia QSO Party](#) (GQP). The goal of the organizers is to get every Georgia county on the air either with fixed stations or with rovers. This is your chance to “be the DX.” It is a real opportunity to practice “running,” calling CQ and letting them come to you. Every year, “The Gavel” award is given to the club with the highest score. NFARL won “The Gavel” two years in a row, then dropped out of the competition last year for the “Spell NFARL during the GQP” adventure. For those of you new to the club, we obtained 1X1 call signs, K4N, K4F, etc., and gave a certificate to everyone who worked all the letters. It was a great time but a lot of work, so this year we are back in the hunt for “The Gavel.” We need your help, so please save the date.



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## **Sandy Springs, NFARES Strengthen Ties / Mike Cohen, AD4MC**



Sandy Springs sent personnel and equipment in response to the late January storms and tornado in North Georgia.

The Sandy Springs Fire Department is building an even stronger relationship with NFARES.

Thanks to Deputy Chief Jeff Scarbrough, KK4ATX, working with Tom Koch, W4UOC, the SSFD has purchased ham radios to install in Chief Scarbrough's and Assistant Chief Mark Duke's fire department vehicles. (IC-2820H and IC-92AD. These radios have both FM and D-STAR capabilities.) Also, Chief Duke is studying to become a ham! For more info on these two NFARL friends, [go here](#).

As we demonstrated during the past three Simulated Emergency Tests and other drills, NFARES is working closely with North Fulton fire and police departments to enhance our emergency communications capabilities.

Join us at our next NFARES meeting at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, February 12, at the [Brandon Hall School](#), Sandy Springs, to see a detailed demonstration of how we will be using ham radio with the police and fire departments.

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## **Field Day Planning Goes Full Speed Ahead / Scott Straw, KB4KBS**

The ad-hoc planning committee for the 2013 NFARL Field Day event will meet Thursday, February 7, at 6:30 PM at Sweet Potatoes Restaurant on Alpharetta Highway at Sun Valley Drive in the Roswell Exchange Shopping Center. The restaurant features an all-you-care-to-eat buffet with home-style meats and vegetables.

If you would like to help plan this largest event of the year for the club, you are invited. Our agenda for our first meeting will be a recap of the 2012 event, with a focus on what went extremely well, and what went not-so-well, with an eye toward making improvements.

One guaranteed new element for this year's fete will be the addition of a serious 6 meter station and even more serious operators as team leaders. Another will be addition of a second CW station (part-time) that will be just for beginners and neophytes. We will staff this station with Elmers and will adhere to a very strict "school zone policy" (under 25 wpm).



To facilitate these and other enhancements, we will try for the first time to network all of our logging computers together over a Local Area Network that will probably involve both wired and wireless topology. Access to the Internet may also be possible. I am hoping that someone who is well-versed in establishing itinerant networks will step forward to lead this effort. We can provide the materials, but we need expertise with regard to cobbling them together in a manner that will be effective, efficient, and fail safe.

So that there will be no excuses for not knowing when Field Day is this year, I will try to remind you each month... It is always the FOURTH FULL WEEKEND in June. This year, that weekend falls on June 22 and 23.

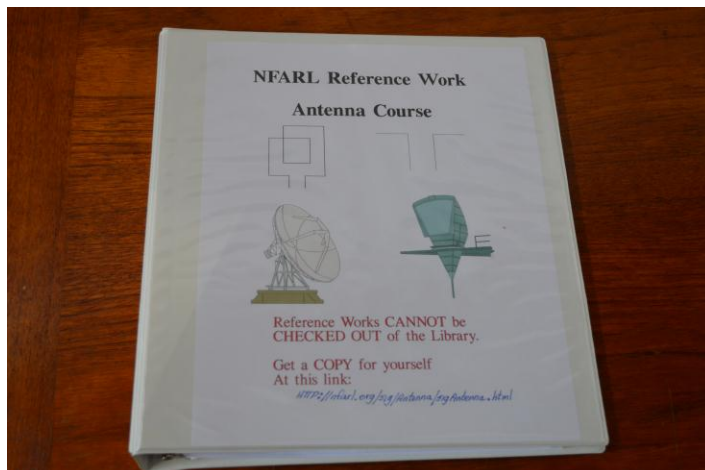
We will be holding Field Day at the same place it has been for the past several years, Waller Park Extension, on Dobbs Drive in Roswell.

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

Each month, I try to identify and highlight library resources that may provide more information on the subject being presented at our monthly club meeting.

This month the topic is [EchoLink](#). The library has ARRL handbooks and there is some information on EchoLink, but it is weak at best. Personally, I'm interested in going to our meeting because I expect I



will learn more about EchoLink than there is info in the library. So, for those like me who know little about EchoLink, I'd suggest attending our February club meeting to learn more about this aspect of our hobby.

We wanted to have a basic antenna course in the library. The Antenna Special Interest Group (SIG) in NFARL about three years ago put on a course on antennas. I asked about getting anything we had on that course and was referred to a NFARL web page. I printed all the link material and have assembled it into a loose-leaf binder for the library. I have created a new category of items for

the library. It is called Reference Works and that antenna class binder will be the first of, we hope, many reference works in the library. Anyone can LOOK at Reference Works in the library. Because these works will be on NFARL web pages, everyone will have Internet access to the Reference Work and if they want all or part of that work they can print a copy themselves. Thus, Reference Works CANNOT be CHECKED OUT. The link to the web page will be on the cover of the Reference Work and a copy of the work can be gotten from the NFARL website.

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## ***Memories the Surprise 'Find' at TechFest / Jim Stafford, W4QO***

At this year's TechFest, I was on the "youth kit building mentoring team" and spent virtually every minute of the event tied to the soldering table. While that was immensely fun and I really enjoyed it, there was another event that knocked my socks off. While at my assigned work station, my friend Lee Hiers, AA4GA, from Athens, came by to show off some free QRP books he had obtained at one of the "booths." And while they were impressive, they were Lee's, not mine, so it was not as much fun for me as it was him. We joked as he gloated on his finds. After a couple of minutes, Lee was picking up his books and he nonchalantly flipped through one of them when he came upon a QSL card stuck inside. My eyes lit up as I immediately recognized it! I tried in my best calm voice to say "If you don't want that card, I'd sure like to have it." Lee seemed surprised and said "Well, if it's something W4QO wants, perhaps I should hold onto it." Then he asked why I was so interested.



Jim Stafford, W4QO /  
Photo by Bill Hampton,  
W4OO



The QSL at left is from Mike Ercolino, W2BDS. It is oversized and quite colorful. Why was I interested? When I was a lad of 14 in southern Indiana, I figured out that if I connected a long wire to the family Sears Silvertone radio, that the bands which were always thought to be "dead," came alive with signals. I was just getting into radio listening – Short Wave Listening – if you will. I had gotten some copies of Popular Electronics and read the SWL pages intently. In addition to sending off signal reports to stations such as the BBC, Radio France, Radio Canada, Radio Netherlands, the magazine said you could send signal reports to ham operators and very likely they would send you their card.

This was still the era of AM, not SSB, on the ham bands and there was a very strong station from New Jersey coming into southern Indiana. I had no idea who W2BDS was, but somehow I figured out his address and sent off my signal report. Within just a week or so, I got back this beautiful QSL from a Mr. Ercolino. I stuck it on the wall of my bedroom along with other cards I had. But alas, when I went off to college, all those QSLs (by now I was a ham and we always thumb-tacked our QSLs to the wall) came down. While I have the ham cards, the W2BDS card was so big that it didn't fit into my shoebox of QSLs so I put it in some kind of book on the shelf to keep it safe. You know how that goes, I never saw it again until I saw the W2BDS card in Lee's "free" book.

Once I told Lee the story, he gladly gave me the card! Oh, happy day! As info, Mike was the founder of the Telrex company (not Telerex) which made antennas and he became quite wealthy selling over 30 million TV antennas back in the day. I was fortunate enough to speak with him on the air a couple of times when I worked in New Jersey in the late 1960s and I told him I had his QSL card somewhere. He invited me to his shack. He lived not too far away from where I lived so one day as I was driving by his estate, I drove up his long driveway admiring the Big Bertha tower that Telrex marketed above the trees. But to my dismay, he was not home that day and I never did get to meet Mike.

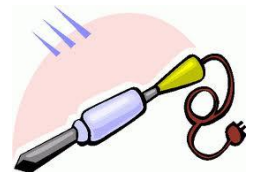
But, as you can see, his card brings back a lot of nice memories from my early days of radio. Thanks Mike, W2BDS, (1906-1982) For more on Mike and his QSL card, [click here](#).

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### ***End of Meeting Drawing / John Kludt, K4SQC***

Each meeting we set up a single table at the front of the room on the left as you face the front. The idea is that when you come, you place an important but unused item on the table. At the end of the meeting we then draw tickets and read the number and invite the lucky winner to come up and pick from the important but unused items on the table. The earlier your number is called the wider your selection.

Of late, either we all have very clean ham shacks or we have fallen away from the tradition a bit: choices have been rather meager. Let's see if can't improve the selection a bit at the next meeting. Last year when cleaning up my shack I took a bag and labeled it "NFARL meeting stuff." In it I placed things that I knew I would never use but that were still serviceable. They were the kind of things that were not worth lugging to a hamfest to try and sell but still too good to throw away. That bag lasted me through several meetings. And through a string of "bad" luck, I gave away more than I acquired!



Let's fill that table up next meeting. Claire McCarthy, KK4JJT, is quick with the numbers and who knows, you might go home with "Just what I needed!"

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### ***Membership Update / Bill Weathers, K4WSW***

#### New Member License Class Breakdown for 2012 - 56

Technician – 26; General – 9; Amateur Extra – 19; Advanced – 1; Not Licensed – 1

#### Membership License Class Breakdown for 2012 – 247

Technician – 60; General – 51; Amateur Extra – 119; Advanced – 12; Not Licensed - 5

It was great to see everyone at TechFest. The membership was well represented with several speakers and hosting the Youth Lounge. Many more events are coming up this spring, we look forward to seeing everyone attend and participate – especially at club-sponsored events.

We welcome the following hams as new members in 2013: Brendan Preece, KK4NJW, General and Joe Dawson, K4WLS, Amateur Extra.

Please [contact me](#) if you have any questions about NFARL membership. I am here to assist all current and prospective members.

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## Contact Us

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## 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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