



NFARL eNEWS

April 2015

www.nfarl.org

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



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 Thursday – YL Net** – 8:00 PM - 145.47 MHz (-) PL 100 - Check NFARL Nets [website](#) for “how to.”
- **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). 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 21st**, 7:30 PM - Alpharetta Adult Activity Center, 13450 Cogburn Road, Alpharetta.
- Meeting begins at 7:30 PM. Pre-meeting activity starts at around 7:00PM. Location: [Alpharetta Adult Activity Center at North Park](#) 13450 Cogburn Road, Alpharetta, GA 30004 [map](#)
Talk-in: 145.47+ (PL 100)
Meeting Topic: Linux (and other OS) in the Shack

- **Fourth Tuesday – NFARL Executive Team Meeting – April 28th**, 7:00 PM – Panera Bread, 1195 Woodstock Road, Roswell. Meetings are open to NFARL club members.

- **May 2015**

- **Third Tuesday – NFARL Club Meeting – May 19th**, 7:30 PM - Alpharetta Adult Activity Center, 13450 Cogburn Road, Alpharetta.

Coming Events

President's Corner / Bob Beeman k4bb



Springtime in Atlanta is a beautiful time, and ham radio makes it even more special. Squirrels, bugs, birds, and antennas spring into the air. Even as solar conditions start to degrade, the DX world comes to life with a new DX contest season. Plus, the Georgia QSO party looms as the most exciting NFARL event since last year's Field Day.

Last weekend, K4SQC orchestrated a [Fox Hunt](#) in [Leita Thompson Memorial Park](#) in Roswell. If you don't know what a Fox Hunt is, ask the Silver Fox himself, Dr John Kludt. The man deviously assembled a miniature two-meter transmitter in what amounted to a clear plastic toothbrush carrier. Hidden under piles of leaves in the park, it was not an easy thing to find. A couple of hams found it quickly, but I was on W4QO's team.

Most importantly, the event was on a beautiful spring Saturday afternoon. What were you doing, working in the yard? Ha!

Our ham radio world gets busier and busier as the year passes. The Georgia QSO Party is a great event every April, and we have lots of skin in the game having won it several times in the last few years. As important as it is, some members are using it for a tune-up for the greatest Field Day, ever, in NFARL history. Our Field Day Chairman, John K4SQC, and his team have already started working and we will hear more about their plans at our monthly meeting.

Did you know that there are alternatives to Microsoft Windows other than Apple Computers and a lot less expensive? Linux is a free, open source

operating system that is both sophisticated and reliable, i.e., about 60% of the world's web sites are powered by Linux servers. Jeff, N1KDO and Tim, WK4U will be presenting facets of Linux at our April meeting, sharing the program time with the Field Day team.

Chuck Catledge, AE4CW and Jim Paine, N4SEC are working on the club's response to the new [HR 1301 House bill](#), The Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2015. Let's give them the support they deserve.

You may have noticed that the format of the club raffle has changed. There will be a couple of tables at the back of the room for you to display your give-a-way treasures. This will not be a flea market. Try to keep the items to an interesting minimum, and remember that if no one else wants your stuff, you must take it home. The raffle itself will be for either gift certificates or other new and valuable items. Depending on the items, you may be asked to buy your ticket.

Thanks to club members for supporting NFARL activities, and being part of our growing club.

Good luck in the contest and the raffle.

73

Bob Beeman

k4bb

Show Your Support for HR 4969, the Radio Amateur Parity Act of 2014! Contact Your U.S. Representative! Learn More [Here](#) RADIOSPORT AND FIELD DAY / John Kludt K4SQC

This year's NFARL Field Day will be one that focuses on RADIOSPORT. As defined by Wikipedia, **Radiosport** is a synonym for amateur radio contesting (ham radio contesting). Contesting is an activity where amateur radio stations attempt to make as many two-way contacts with other stations as possible, following certain defined parameters of the competition, to maximize a score. The Field Day captains have decided to expose the entire cadre of NFARL



operators to the fun and excitement of operating “contest style” with the goal of developing some new contest operators in the Club. In order to truly enjoy Radiosport a few concepts should be practiced, and Wes, W3WL, intends to hold training sessions designed to go over the fundamentals of the art. This is indeed a real opportunity to learn the basics of Radiosport from a true master. You may not be aware that Wes is a veteran of numerous Dxpeditions to rare and exotic places. As such he has become very skilled at making contacts while listening to the "wall of noise" that arises when you are the DX and the whole world is calling. Two Saturdays (April 25 and May 2) are set aside for one-hour sessions designed to enhance your enjoyment of “Radiosport” during Field Day. If you are participating in NFARL FD or maybe you are participating from home or with another group or maybe not at all but might want to gain some basic knowledge of the Radiosport art, I encourage your attendance on one of these two days. It is not every day you get the opportunity to learn the basics of Radiosport from someone of Wes' stature. Please send Wes an email (w3wl@nfarl.org) or call him at 770 642 2087 to let him know what day and time is best for you!

McGinnis Woods / Martha Muir W4MSA

Some of NFARL’s Youngest Members Teach Students Ham Radio @ McGinnis Woods

Mill Springs students Eli Musgrave, KM4HFZ, Trey Reid, KK4QJB, Megan Brown, KM4HFY, Christian Kelm, KK4YDU, and Trevor Parkey, worked with Jim Stafford, W4QO, Tim Lemmon, WK4U, and Martha Muir, W4MSA to present a series of lessons on three aspects of Amateur Radio to students at the McGinnis Woods Country Day School on March 27 as part of their Super Science Week activities. Using lessons developed by Jim, Trey and Christian introduced the McGinnis Woods students to Morse code and had them dah-ing and dit-ting the different letters aloud as well as sending their names in CW to Jim. Megan and Trevor worked with Tim to present lessons on the qualities of waves and demonstrated how they can travel around a spherical planet. Eli worked with Martha to illustrate the relationship between electricity and magnetism. The lessons were received enthusiastically by the McGinnis Woods students who challenged the MSA students with several unexpected questions. A teacher who accompanied one group of teachers had an interesting exchange with

Trevor. Here's what Tim reports about their conversation: "I think it was the last session, and a teacher was with the students in the audience. The teacher asked a question with a hypothetical situation. He asked if he was in a house and the house caught on fire, could he get on a ham radio and contact the fire department? He continued asking if the fire department could track down his location by the radio signal? Trevor jumped right in and answered that the fire department probably could use a directional antenna to get a direction, but that's about all they could do. Trevor then commented to the teacher that he would suggest you hurry up and get out of the house! I got a pretty good chuckle from that. He's so literal, yet accurate :) Funny stuff indeed." Tim also stated that he was "quite impressed with the curriculum Jim had created. It was fun to deliver. What really impressed me was sitting back and letting the two Mill Springs students run the show. Wow! They really did a great job. They really did fine, and connected with their audience each time." Jim and Martha had similar remarks about the students they worked with.

Ten Ways.... W4QO / Jim Stafford **Ten ways to have the most fun in Ham Radio.**

When non hams, who are looking at getting their ham licenses, ask me what they should do, I give them this list of what I think are the 10 things to increase their ham radio FUN!! I'll write this as if I'm speaking to YOU the prospective ham. If you are already a TECH and tired of those 2M repeaters, you may skip step #2, but do NOT skip the others!

1. Get a used HF rig – a \$200 transceiver from eBay. I was browsing around eBay today and saw several digital readout solid state rigs for under \$200. Granted they were 25 years old and the displays looked like NIXIE tubes but there they were. I recommend this because you can use them to make contacts when you get your license but more importantly it becomes a piece of test equipment for when you build your first transceiver (see step #6). Most of these solid state rigs are easy to tune and go down to 5 watts of course! At that level of power, you'll be able to join that great bunch of folks who operate QRP. And short of buying a transceiver, if you talk real nice to a ham whose has been having all this fun for 10 or 20 years, you'll find they probably have a rig they will loan you, some permanently!

2. Listen/Study/Get your license/callsign (2x3) With the rig above (which you could sell for what you have in it if you decide this FUN isn't for you), you can begin to listen to the bands and get a "feel" for how to operate (but steer clear of 75M). You'll also be able to begin to copy code, even W1AW code practice. You can go to a number of online sites to get the free question pool for your Technician license. Many sites will also give you sample tests and they grade them for you. If you need some help, get the ARRL license manual or sign up for the ARRL online course which includes the license manual in the price. Soon you'll take the test and get your 2x3 callsign. Oh, you might also check with your local radio club (most can be found on the ARRL site) and they may either have classes for you or have a mentor to help you.

3. Learn the code (CW) –get your General (1x3) Now you could just repeat #2 and study for the General test. And yes, you need to do that to have the MOST fun in ham radio but you'll miss out on a lot of fun if you don't learn the Morse code. There are so many programs you can use to learn the code from the internet that it will make your head spin. I like the CW PLAYER program but if you have one of those MP3 players, do not miss out on the K7QO code course. All these may be found with the google button. And remember, you can use your tech license on the CW bands down there on say 40 meters with that OLDIE rig you got on ebay! Don't worry that you don't go very fast. Most will slow down for you and if you check with the SKCC or FISTS, they have frequencies where they encourage slow CW. It's always easier to send than receive, so use that key to send even if it's only to yourself. Worried about copying, test a program like CW GET to run in the background. Oh sure, it's a crutch but it might help you. One more point – remember those QRP nuts? They tend to run much slower CW and you don't have to run QRP to talk to one of them. For SKCC, look 50 khz from band edge and for FISTS, look at 58 khz up from edge. There are lists of QRP calling frequencies at multiple sites on the web but start with 7.030. Somewhere in here, you'll take and pass the General test but stay away from the mic a few more weeks if at all possible. And while you're at it get yourself one of those old time callsigns that used to be reserved for higher classed licensees. Yes, you could get one of these when you are a new TECH, but why not make it a reward for upgrading to General? What I mean is get a 1x3 call with your General. And please get one with a number from your call area (in our case "4"). Maybe you can just drop the second letter of the first callsign you received or maybe you can get your initials.

4. **Get your QSL card – cheapqsl.com (\$12)** Now when you get that Tech license you could order some QSLs or you could make them with John, WA8RCR's QSL Maker program since you'll be getting a new 1x3 callsign soon. These can be personalized and the program is FREE. But when/if you get a new callsign, check out the huge number of QSL printers out there, but for the buck (and for service), I don't think you can beat cheapQSLs and Sue/Hal. The price is right and they have some "cool" designs. Use these like business cards when you go to ham club meetings, hamfests, etc. They are also good to hand to a non ham who sees your callsign license plate.

5. **Make a CW contact, then 10, then 100 (SKCC)** Somewhere in around step #2, start making contacts – CW that is. Write down on a card strings of what you would send such as MY QTH IS... MY ANTENNA IS... Just about anything you can think of that you would want to send. I WORK FOR... I HAVE 6 KIDS... you get the idea. Once you make one QSO, make 10, etc. You might want to join FISTS and/or SKCC (a FREE one). There is also a yahoo group that's called HamRadioHelpGroup you might want to join. They are very helpful You could also post your questions at the QRP Forum on the qrparci.org site. You've probably joined QRP ARCI or some of the other great QRP clubs by now.

6. **Build your own (QRP) rig – MFJ CUB or TenTec or ???** Now here is what separates the men from the boys. Very few hams have actually built and operated their own transceiver. There are few thrills that exceed the sound of that transceiver when you turn it on and hear that signal coming through, unless it's hearing someone come back to your signal when you call them on a rig you built! We're talking QRP here. Think of it – the power of one of those screw- in Christmas tree light bulbs and using it to talk to someone in the next state or across the world! As to rigs, go for a kit. But check the web and post to the qrp-tech yahoo group for more help.

7. **Go for an award – WAS, WAC, collecting QSLs** Yes, there are thousands of awards out there. It is also quite a thrill to get a QSL in the mailbox. Just collecting the QSLs is fun. I used to put them on the wall with a thumbtack but that was before I owned my own house! Get one of those Worked All States maps and yes, color it in when you work a state. If you have kids in the early grades, they will enjoy helping you on this. If you get frustrated getting return QSLs (I know, it's hard to believe that all hams do

not send cards for all contacts), you can get awards from QRP ARCI without cards BUT you have to have made the QSOs at the QRP level (5w CW, 10w SSB).

8. Enter a contest – Spartan Sprint, QRP ARCI Party, Weekend Sprint

Now all may not agree with this one but you should try it. By now your CW will be a bit faster, but the QRP contests also are slower and less pressure. One that is a lot of fun is the Spartan Sprint – the first Monday of each month. Also, the NAQC Club runs a different contest each month so give it a go as the Brits say. SKCC has the Weekend Sprint once a month. You may find you like it and it's a good way to pick up those states and countries.

9. Build your antenna & go TO THE FIELD Of course, you will have had to build an antenna sometime up there around Step #2 but this one is listed here because it is FUN to try different antennas when you take your radio outside and operate. There is nothing like the smell of the outdoors while you are operating. You can do it impromptu or you can do it with a group such as Field Day which comes up in late June. And while I'm on it – DO NOT, I repeat, DO NOT buy a wire antenna! You'll spend like 5 to 10 times as much as the parts you use and they are fun to build. Now for your "base" station, you'll probably want to make the antenna pretty substantial but for those field antennas, they can be pretty flimsy and still work so they can be fun to experiment with. You say you live in a deed restricted location, well, antenna experimentation is the thing for you. They are called stealth antennas, so don't give up. And don't forget you can always go "to the field" to do your operating. And of course, there's mobile HF!

10. Upgrade to Extra Class - (1x2 or 2x1) By now you know how to do this – so what's your excuse? And if you're diligent, you can even get yourself an EXTRA class callsign (1x2 or 2x1)! So that's about it. From here you can fill in the next 10 bullets. How about all the varied aspects of ham radio from digital to satellites to public service to give you years of thrills? But whatever you do, don't overlook the fun of CW. Like Ward Silver, W0AX, said in a recent op ed on the subject, "just because they invited cameras didn't mean people stopped painting!" Just because you don't have to pass a CW exam in today's amateur radio tests, doesn't mean you can't (or shouldn't) learn CW and enjoy the fun right along with QRP. That's my opinion. © 2007-2015

Things You Don't Need for SOTA / K4KPK, Kevin Kleinfelter

Some hams don't participate in SOTA out of a mistaken notion that they don't have the necessary equipment/skill/physique. Let's look at some things you do NOT need in order to participate in SOTA.

In order to be an activator, you do NOT need

- **10,000' mountains.** Even Mississippi has a SOTA summit. It is a lofty 730' at the summit. Georgia has over 130 summits, with none reaching 4800'.
- **An SUV with 4-wheel drive.** Many trailheads are accessible via paved highways. Others are accessible via roads in good condition. Some do require 4WD, but one hame made it to 74 different summits in the southeast in an 'all-terrain' Corolla.
- **Topographic maps, bushwhacking or mountain-climbing skill.** There are detailed directions on how to reach *many* summits. Most of those summits are accessible via clear hiking trails. Some are reached 100% via *roads*. A few will require a bushwhack.
- **Hiking boots.** Boots *are* nice for some trails. However, some 'trails' are paved and others are a short walk on an easy trail, and sneakers are plenty good. Some of the most remote summits in Georgia have been reached in nothing more than 5 year-old jogging shoes.
- **Good physical conditioning.** If you're thinking, "I really need to get in better shape before I try activating," consider a drive-up or a nearly drive-up summit. If you can participate in Field Day, you've got the stamina to activate several summits in the southeast. There are summits you can activate even if you're in a wheelchair! (Email me if you're in this category and you want to know how.)
- **An expensive specialty radio.** If you own a solid-state rig and you can carry it and a battery across a parking lot, you've got the radio you need. You can activate many summits with nothing more than an HT. If you're a CW operator, you can activate with a "Tuna Tin" or other cheap kit. Shucks - you don't even really need to own a radio. Email an activator and ask if you can tag along on an activation and use his radio.
- **An entire day.** If you're in the Atlanta area, there are at least 3 different summits which could be activated in a morning or an afternoon. (If you've *got* a whole summer day, you could go for the full set!)
- **CW skills.** There are activators who reach Mountain Goat using SSB.
- **Fast CW skills.** I struggle at 13 WPM. There are guys who go out at 10 WPM. You might put off a few chasers at 5 WPM, but I'd be surprised if you couldn't get 4 chasers at 5 WPM if you have a strong signal.
- **Great operating skill.** My first QSO was a SOTA activation. I can assure you (as can the chasers) that I was inept. (Shucks, I'm barely 'ept' now.)

- **A fancy antenna.** If you have a tuner or an ATU, just throw 29' of wire in a tree and lay out a similar counterpoise. One of the most popular SOTA antennas is an EFHW, such as the PAR Trail-friendly.
- **A General Class license.** There are successful VHF activators. In order to be a chaser, you do NOT need
- **A beam at 60'.** OK. I'll admit that this *helps*. However, you can be a successful chaser with an NVIS on 40 meters. With a better antenna, you can chase activators around the world. With a lesser antenna, you just stick to activators closer to home.
- **CW (or SSB).** There are activators who work strictly CW, activators who work strictly USB, and there are activators who work both. You'll have more opportunity if you can run both. You'll even find a *few* activators who can work PSK31 or RTTY. (There are some CW-only activators, because the smallest radios are CW-only.)
- **Fast CW skills.** A slow chaser will struggle more than a slow activator. If the activator calls CQ at 10 WPM, everyone answers at 10 WPM. If you're a slow-CW chaser and you tune in to a 25 WPM activation, you're not going to be able to tell who's who. But... Pick up the activator's call sign from SOTAWatch, and just wait until the beeping mostly stops, and send your call sign at your speed. Most activators will respond at your speed. (Some of them have keyers that make this tough, so you might get fast characters with BIG spacing.)
- **A General Class license or an HF rig.** (See activator non-needs.) If you're chasing VHF or 10 meters, be sure and contact the activator in advance, and ask him to work your band. If you have a VHF beam 30' AGL in north Georgia, you could be a *very* popular chaser. There is a shortage of chasers working VHF in this area, and there are activators who would love to carry only an HT.
- **A ham license.** What??!! It's true. There is an SWL category in SOTA for non-hams.

No excuses! You have what you need to participate in SOTA.

See you on the summits! 73 DE K4KPK / Kevin

Where can I find out more?

- Official site: <http://sotadata.org.uk/>
- Mailing list: <https://groups.yahoo.com/groups/summits>
- K4KPK's site: <http://k4kpk.com/content/sota-menu>
- Email me (K4KPK). My email address is available via <http://www.qrz.com/db/K4KPK>.

K4KPK, Kevin Kleinfelter is Georgia's first SOTA Mountain Goat.

North Fulton ARES / Mike, K4LJG, EC of NF ARES

I have returned from snowy New England to some great spring weather. It is good to be back home. I look forward to getting back into the swing of things. As an aside, I moved down to Georgia from Massachusetts thirty years ago April 1st! Time does fly.

April 14, 2015 will be our next ARES meeting at the Brandon Hall School. Go to our website at <http://www.nfares.org> for details. Also, every Sunday night we have our ARES Net. You do not need to be a member to check in. It is held at 8:30 PM and we encourage everyone to check in. We are always looking for more NFARL members to join us in ARES. It is a lot of fun and a great way to give back to the community using our unique talents. We have a lot of activities coming up. Check our website at <http://www.nfares.org> or join our Yahoo group at <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/nfares/info> for more information.

I would like to recognize our AECs for all their great work and dedication. Mike Cohen, AD4MC, Wayne Chapman, KG5WU, Jim Paine, N4SEC, Jim Stafford, W4QO, Tom Koch, W4UOC and our latest AEC, Mike Clark, KK4YDQ. Thanks so much for all you do! I hope to see everyone at the next ARES meeting as well as our regular ARES Net on Sunday nights!
73, Mike, K4LJG

Mark your calendars! ARRL Field Day is June 27-28, 2015



Now is the time for all good men and women to come to the aid of their fellow NFARL club members by purchasing your 2015 ARRL Field Day T-Shirts, Youth T-Shirts, Caps, Mugs, Pins and Patches at a considerable discount from making a direct ARRL order. Yes, there is a markup on our website but that \$2.00 helps cover the group order shipping making your T-Shirts \$10 cheaper than your individual orders. So, if you order your \$14.95 T-shirt + \$12.50 for shipping, direct from ARRL for that one shirt your cost is now \$27.45 instead of \$16.95 as marked on the NFARL Mart (www.nfarl.org/mart).



We will be closing down the ordering on April 30th so we can place the order on Friday May 1st. Thank you for participating and helping NFARL and the ARRL with our upcoming annual ARRL Field Day Event.

73,

Fred – N4CLA

Activities - GQP - Turn in your scores N4TOL



By the time you are reading this, the 54th running of the Georgia QSO Party (GQP) will already have taken place. However, 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 georgiaqsoparty.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. So be sure to submit your scores to be eligible for a NFARL award.

73 John Tramontanis N4TOL

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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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