

North Fulton Amateur Radio League NFARL eNEWS

March 2024

Over 43 Years Promoting
Service | Friendship | Education | Fun



March 2024 Club Meeting / Steve Randall, KO4VW

Georgia QSO Party

Our March NFARL Club meeting presentation focus is on the Georgia QSO Party. John Tramontanis will be telling us all about the Georgia QSO Party, and how you can participate and have fun on the air. For the GQP, we are the stations everyone else is after! This is a once a year opportunity to be sought after by everyone else participating in the event.

John will provide a detailed explanation for the NFARL Challenge and how this adds a fun twist to the event. After John's presentation, I will talk about how to make working this, and other contests, as simple and easy, focusing on setting up contest specific logging software and providing all the information you will need to make life easy and fun! This should allow you to excel in getting all the contacts you want in the GQP.

Steve Randall KO4VW



Join us on March 19, 2024 for our monthly NFARL Club meeting. We'll be gathering at our regular meeting location; Preston Ridge Community Center, 3655 Preston Ridge Road Suite 100, Alpharetta, GA 30005. The facility's doors will open at 7:00PM. Our meeting will begin at 7:30PM and should conclude by 9:00PM.

The March meeting will be broadcast on Zoom using this invitation link: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86255827457?pwd=a1FHR3F1bDBqMUVuY3plMDdFa2VMQT09

Meeting ID: 862 5582 7457

Passcode: 584698

Join us in person at Preston Ridge Community Center!

President's Corner / Mike Riley, KN40AK

Vernal Equinox 2024

Well, on March 19, 2024 you'll be able to celebrate the arrival of the spring season once again. This is the "astronomical start of the spring season" in the Northern Hemisphere. Lengths of day and night are nearly the same at this point in time. Maybe this gives those of you with busy schedules an equal chance to operate along the Gray Line. You can read this article to brush up on your Gray Line operating skills (An Introduction to Gray-Line DXing QST November 1992, pp. 80-82), it's an easy read.

Another point to consider during the next couple of weeks- get out there and inspect any antennae you have strung through the trees! Do this before the leaves complete their spring time emergence and potentially cause interference with line management. Doing so now may not eliminate all the challenges associated with this task, but at least you'll have the chance of better visibility to the hangers and pulleys involved.

Along with the change to increased daylight comes an increase in day time temperatures. Recently we've enjoyed some very pleasant weather in the Atlanta area that make outdoor operations enjoyable. During the next several weeks there are some radio sport activities in which you can take advantage of outdoor operations; the Georgia State Parks on the Air event on April 6 - 7, 2024 and Georgia QSO Party on April 13 – 14, 2024 are two worth considering.

So, on Tuesday, March 19th, do a couple of things – plan to come to the NFARL club meeting, and if you have time, see if you can prove or disprove the legend of balancing an egg on end during the vernal equinox.

73, Mike KN4OAK

Slope's BBQ Hosts Yet Another Ham Test Session! / Wes Lamboley, W3WL

March 9th marked the umpteenth time Slope's BBQ was the scene for NFARL ham testing. Six guys participated in the event, and the results follow:

- 1. Johnathan Hamilton is now KQ4PQD. His call is Hi-Q! Johnathan got interested in radio at the tender age of six years as a Short Wave Listener. He is very knowledgeable about radio, and will fit right in with the rest of us hams. He works for SalesForce. It turns out that Hamilton is a very popular name for hams; there are over 87 pages of Hamiltons in QRZ!
- 2. John Spehr is now KQ4PQV. Yet another Hi-Q call. John is interested in Software Defined Radios and talks about them on You Tube. He is a software engineer with UPS and specializes in Logistics, which has got to be a very interesting job!
- 3. Mark Moelter is now KQ4PTP. Mark got interested in ham radio as his dad is a fairly new ham as of 3 years ago. Mark is interested in Emergency Preparedness. He is also an avid bicyclist. Mark is an Electrical Engineer and specializes in Software Engineering. These first three guys all got their Tech licenses.
- 4. Luke McCoin is KQ4OSO and he got his Tech at HamCation this year. Luke tried for General but narrowly missed and will be back next month. Luke's grandparents are both hams and were in town visiting. They both came by Slope's along with Luke's dad to see the ARES demo we had set up.
- 5. John Luchetti, KQ4OSG, received his Technician license in February 2024. John tested for and passed his General license exam this month. John resides in Cumming and is looking forward to using his new band privileges!
- 6. Jake Schodowski, KQ4PWA, also passed his Technician license exam. Jake resides in Alpharetta. He is an RF Engineer with ATX Networks. Jake's other hobby interest is 3D printing.

Congratulations to all the VE test candidates! We appreciate your interest and effort in participating in the Amateur Radio community!

We would be remiss to not express our thanks to the VE Team and to the North Fulton ARES Team for providing their support to the testing and licensing program. Both teams do a fantastic job each month in the area of test administration and operations demonstration at the testing event.

This month we'd like to to express our special thanks to Tammy KK4USA, who took time to show test candidates and their families, some of the means and equipment used by ARES to maintain their emergency communications capabilities. Tammy set up her Go Box rig and was able to make contact with the other ARES Team members monitoring on frequency. She also explained the various communication modes used, and shared her radio contact experiences. Way to go Tammy!

Please welcome these new and upgraded hams to NFARL when you you meet them next!

Slope's BBQ Hosts Yet Another Ham Test Session!/Continued from previous page



Left: Jake Schodowski, KQ4PWA

Right: Steve KO4VW and Jake





Jonathan Hamilton, KQ4PQD



Mark Moelter, KQ4OSO



Wes, W3WL



Left: Steve KO4VW

Right: Luke McCoin, KQ4OSO



Bahamas QRP / Jeffrey Otterson, N1KDO/C6A

Results of my Bahamas QRP operation as C6ADO

I'm back (sadly) from Eleuthera, Bahamas, where I operated C6ADO (QRP) with my KX3.

Summary:

I operated February 11-16, 6 days, 9 AM to a bit after noon each day. After noon I would run out of shade. On Friday the 16th, I also set up in the late afternoon for phone only -- logging on paper -- using a "talent cell 6,000 mAH" battery to power the rig.

Results:

I worked 275 on Phone and 270 on Data (FT4 and FT8). Several NFARL members were worked after I spotted myself on the Club's Discord server.

17M: 28 data, 2 phone

15M: 107 data

12M: 105 data, 140 phone 10M: 30 data, 132 phone

I worked 51 unique DXCC countries. Of the 545 total worked, to date I have 370 LoTW confirmations -- about 2/3rds. I have also received a few paper QSL cards.

People will tell you that QRP phone does not work. These results say otherwise! W4QO always encouraged me to tell people that QRP phone does work.

The Setup:

I used my usual setup, which is band-specific end-fed half-wave wires (except on 10M, where I used the 20M EFHW wire as a end-fed full-wave) on the SOTA Beams "10M Travel Mast."

- Elecraft KX3
- Pro Audio Engineering PAE-Kx33 power supply
- DigiRig Mobile USB interface, homebrew short interconnect cables
- Talent Cell 6,000 mAh Lithium ion Battery Pack
- Homebrew 64:1 unun
- SOTA Beams 10m Travel Mast
- Homebrewed band-specific end-fed half-wave wire antenna elements
- my trusty Lenovo T420S laptop and its power supply
- random coax, bungee cords, AC extension cord

(there more about my field kit here: https://www.n1kdo.com/grp-field-setup/)

Bahamas QRP / Jeffrey Otterson, - continued from previous page

Commentary:

Setup was to bungee cord the travel mast to a convenient post, pull a table into the shade, set up antenna and radio, and get going. Typically I could get set up to operate in less than 10 minutes. Some of the tourists and some of the locals were somewhat interested, I think most people thought I was working remotely (the antenna is pretty low profile) and left me alone.

The band conditions were very good; the gods of propagation smiled at me daily.

My best DX was YE1BON in Indonesia on 17M FT8. I was running 4.0 watts with the KX3, that's about what it can do for FT8 without getting too hot. About 11,000 miles. 2,750 miles/watt. Wow!

The next best DX was either VK3NX in Southern Australia (9,800 miles) or JA7OWD in Japan, as well as about 5 other JAs (8,000 miles) worked on 10M phone, where the KX3 will put out 10 watts. The contact to VK was close to 1,000 miles a watt on 10M phone.

Some will tell you that the DX callsign adds 10dB to your signal -- perhaps it does -- but I am a firm believer in vertical antennas set up near the ocean.

All in all, this was super fun, and I am thankful my bride puts up with me doing this on vacation.

About Eleuthera:

Eleuthera is a small island in the Bahamas. It is 110 miles long, and less than a mile wide at narrow points. It is about 150 miles East of Key Largo, Florida. Delta has regional jet service from Atlanta, the flight takes about 2.5 hours. Travel to our resort was an hour by taxi. The Bahamas have their own currency, but it is pegged to the US Dollar, so dollars are accepted there. There is some agriculture and fishing, but just about everything else is imported, and expensive. Eleuthera felt safe despite the State Department's level 2 travel advisory for the Bahamas. There were mosquitos and no-see-ums, and they could get fierce at times, I recommend insect repellent.

Licensing:

Unfortunately, CEPT and other forms of reciprocal licensing do not apply to a lot of places I have been to in the Caribbean, which means... paperwork.

However, licensing in the Bahamas is pretty easy. Instructions are here: https://www.urcabahamas.bs/licensing/how-to-apply/ -- fill out this form, send with copy of passport ID page, copy of FCC license, and \$35 (by credit card) and they will issue you a license. You can email the whole shooting match.

In 2023 they issued me N1KDO/C6A, but that was kind of a mouthful, so this time I asked (politely) to be issued C6ADO, which they did!

Pictures:

Here is your fearless operator working making some digital contacts with a icy Kalik for company:





Left: Typical setup – notice the mast

Right: The entire station, except the travel mast, fits in this laptop knapsack



The Georgia QSO Party







The 2024 Georgia QSO Party will be held on April 13-14 with two operating periods: 1800Z Saturday (2:00 pm EDST Saturday) until 0359Z Sunday (11:59 pm EDST Saturday) and 1400Z Sunday (10:00 am EDST Sunday) to 2359Z Sunday (7:59 pm EDST Sunday).

All NFARL members and friends are encouraged to participate in the GQP in 2024.

This is your chance to "be the DX." It is a real opportunity to practice "running," calling CQ and letting other stations come to you. It is also a chance to test your station's effectiveness under contest conditions and help to improve your abilities as an operator.

Categories for operators include:

Rover - a challenge to operate, however, rovers give other participants the opportunity to work many Georgia counties and achieve fine scores themselves.

Portable - a newer category that should draw some interesting competition, I would hope our SOTA/POTA folks would bring in some point to the "Challenge" in these categories!

Fixed - Single Ops and Multi Ops

Visit https://gaqsoparty.com/ for Georgia QSO Party information and rules.

The North Fulton Amateur Radio League will be operating 10 special event call sign stations on the air during the event.

The stations will be:

Contact any one of these stations to receive the special GQP QSL card



A special "Spell NFARL" Certificate will be awarded to those that:

Work 5 of these 10 in any combination to spell NFARL Ns or Ks, SSB and/or CW, any band combo

Work All 10 for the prestigious and highly coveted "Clean Sweep Award"



Join the "NFARL Challenge"

In addition to participating and submitting scores in the official GQP, we would like to ask all NFARL members and friends, who will be operating in the Georgia QSO Party, to please submit your name and call sign to note your participation in this year's "NFARL Challenge". The "Challenge" is an internal club event. Noting your participation in advance enables us to keep team members updated on the progress of the "Challenge". Adding your name will enable us to track and listen for the familiar calls in the contest, and also tally scores for the "NFARL Challenge" awards program. Certificates will be award in all categories for various achievements.

Georgia QSO Party 2023 "NFARL Challenge" N4N/K5JR



1st Place – Overall Rover Multi - Low Power Mixed

To be added to the NFARL QSO Party Challenge list, please email me with your name and call sign to n4tol@nfarl.org. Updates to the list and the "Challenge" will be posted to the NFARL Groups io reflector going forward as new details emerge and new names are submitted. Please sign up and help encourage others to join the fun, and feel free to contact me with any questions.

I look forward to working you in the contest.

73 - John N4TOL n4tol@nfarl.org

Fabric J-Pole (the Fara-J)/ Dave Bisciotti, KO4USA

I came across an interesting project while watching YouTube last week. A ham radio guy that goes by the name of "Ham Radio Rookie", presented an interesting premise that Faraday Tape could be used as an antenna, specifically as a 2 Meter J-Pole design. I decided to give it a try...

This guy is Ben, VE6SFX. Take a look at his web page https:hamradiorookie.com for details of the build. Or you can go to his YouTube channel "Ham Radio Rookie"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X7K6DNLD9Wo&t=667s and watch there. BTW- He is also selling them (the Fara-J) now...

To build one yourself, follow his video on his Home Page: (Make a Faraday Fabric Antenna..) https://hamradiorookie.com/make-a-faraday-fabric-antenna-for-sota-pota-and-iota-ultimate-portable-solution-hamradiorookie/

First you need Faraday Cloth tape – Available from where else – AMAZON... (use the link on Ben's website to get to the Amazon sites shown below for the tape and other supplies).



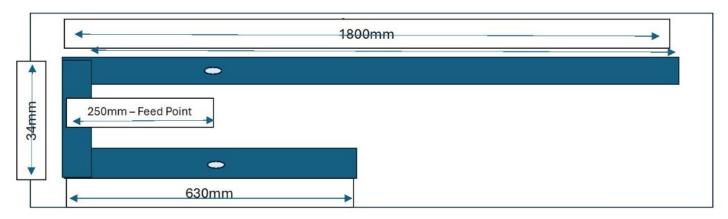
Next you need some fabric to stick the tape to...Again, AMAZON



Fabric J-Pole (the Fara-J)/ - continued from previous page

Once you've obtained materials, the next step is to layout the tape on the fabric. The rough dimensions are:

630mm for the Stub - 1800 mm for the Main - The Feed Point is about 250mm from the bottom (see Diagram below – NOTE: The lengths are approximate and may need to be adjusted using a VNA).



Ben, VE6SFX, sewed his tape to the fabric after he was satisfied with the SWR testing. He also poked holes the tape to facilitate attachment of the feed line pigtail. You can see details in his YouTube video. Below, there are some pictures of a completed assembly.



Left: the tape is shown laid out on the fabric The red 3D printed hanger is shown on the bottom end.

Right: the back side of the fabric, showing the feedline pigtail assembly fastened to the antenna. The 3D printed red mounting plate is bolted to the pigtail and the fabric/tape assembly. Note the BNC connector.



Fabric J-Pole (the Fara-J)/ - continued from previous page

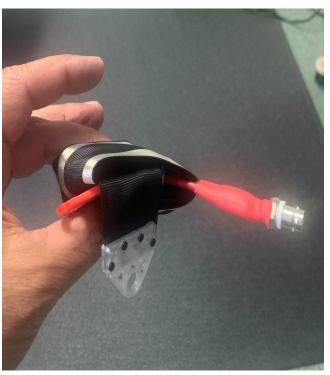


Ben used black pmaterial to print his strain releif mounting bracket in his video. Here you can see the red plastic strain relief attached to the fabric assembly. Go to 8:11 minutes in Ben's video for mre detail on the strain relief.

You can go to Ben's Patreon link to download the files and related instructions for assembly if you need them.

When completed, this antenna weighs about 1.4 ounces and rolls up into a package that can easily be stowed in a pocket, day pack, or other small space.

Make one and enjoy!



Georgia State Parks On The Air/ Richard Dervan, N1RBD

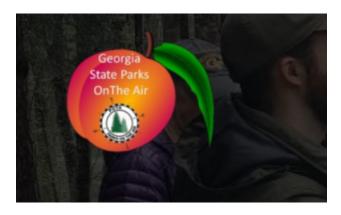
The North Fulton Amateur Radio Leage will be participating in the Georgia State Parks On The Air event being held from 0800ET on April 6 through 1959 ET on April 7. There will be no official operating times or locations as a group like the yearly Lake Lanier event. These will be left up to the individuals or groups who wish to participate.

This event is not as structured as Field Day since you are allowed to choose your own park and operate as little or as much as you wish. Only have a couple of hours? Go out and do a quickie at a nearby park. However, we will ask that participants sign up to have a callsign suffix assigned to you for spotting purposes. It is also VERY important for FTx and CW operators to prevent RBN from overwriting your spots.

If you operated as K4JJ during the POTA sprint last fall, this will be very similar.

The official rules and FAQ for the event can be found at https://gaparks.org/forms-rules-register/. Please note that not all POTA parks are elligible for this event, only qualifying State operated parks. Entities such as the Chattahoochee River, WMAs, and National Forests are not eligible.

A link to sign up for the NFARL operation will be posted to all club social media outlets soon. For more information, contact Richard Dervan at nfpoc@n1rbd.radio.



Putting the 52 Georgia Parks on the Air Annually

Extra Extra! / From the Extra Class Question Pool

New info for Technicians and Generals and a refresher for Extra Class Licensees!



E4A01

Which of the following limits the highest frequency signal that can be accurately displayed on a digital oscilloscope?

- A. Sampling rate of the analog-to-digital converter
- B. Amount of memory
- C. Q of the circuit
- D. All these choices are correct

See answer on the last page!

The new Amateur Extra-class license examination question pool, effective from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2024, has been released and is available at the National Conference of Volunteer Coordinators (NCVEC) website.

Note the new Technician class license examination question pool is effective July 1, 2022.

Ian NV4C and his team hold license test sessions on the second Saturday of each month.

For more information including upcoming test dates, <u>click here</u>.

Contest Corner

These are some contests and events besides the "routine K1USN, CWops, and other organizational events" scheduled to occur the near future

Contest Corner

These are some contests and events besides the "routine K1USN, CWops, and other organizational events" scheduled to occur the near future. Hover over the + sign & click

Contest Name	Time & Date	
+ NAQCC CW Sprint	0030Z-0230Z, Mar 21	
+ Maidenhead Mayhem Sprint	0000Z, Mar 23 to 2359Z, Mar 24	
+ North American SSB Sprint Contest	0000Z-0400Z, Mar 24	
+ QCX Challenge	1300Z-1400Z, Mar 25	
+ QCX Challenge	1900Z-2000Z, Mar 25	
+ QCX Challenge	0300Z-0400Z, Mar 26	
+ SKCC Sprint	0000Z-0200Z, Mar 27	
+ Sasquatch Stomp	1900Z, Mar 29 to 0300Z, Mar 30	
+ 144 MHz Spring Sprint	1900 local - 2300 local, Apr 1	
+ PODXS 070 Club PSK 31 Flavors Contest	1000Z, Apr 6 to 0400Z, Apr 7	
+ Georgia State Parks on the Air	1200Z, Apr 6 to 2359Z, Apr 7	
+ Louisiana QSO Party	1400Z, Apr 6 to 0200Z, Apr 7	
+ Mississippi QSO Party	1400Z, Apr 6 to 0200Z, Apr 7	
+ Missouri QSO Party	1400Z, Apr 6 to 0400Z, Apr 7 and 1400Z-2000Z, Apr 7	
+ Florida State Parks on the Air	1400Z-2200Z, Apr 6 and 1400Z-2200Z, Apr 7	
+ SP DX Contest	1500Z, Apr 6 to 1500Z, Apr 7	
+ Solar Eclipse QSO Party	1400Z-2400Z, Apr 8	
+ QRP ARCI Spring QSO Party	0000Z-0600Z, Apr 13	
+ JIDX CW Contest	0700Z, Apr 13 to 1300Z, Apr 14	
+ New Mexico QSO Party	1400Z, Apr 13 to 0200Z, Apr 14	
+ Georgia QSO Party	1800Z, Apr 13 to 0359Z, Apr 14 and 1400Z-2359Z, Apr 14	
+ North Dakota QSO Party	1800Z, Apr 13 to 1800Z, Apr 14	
+ Nebraska QSO Party	1100Z, Apr 20 to 2259Z, Apr 21	
+ Texas State Parks on the Air	1400Z, Apr 20 to 0200Z, Apr 21 and 1400Z-2000Z, Apr 21	
+ Michigan QSO Party	1600Z, Apr 20 to 0400Z, Apr 21	
+ Ontario QSO Party	1800Z, Apr 20 to 0500Z, Apr 21 and 1200Z-1800Z, Apr 21	
+ Quebec QSO Party	1200Z-2200Z, Apr 21	
+ ARRL Rookie Roundup, SSB	1800Z-2359Z, Apr 21	

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! Check NFARES.org for more information.

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 (Discord) but Internet is not required to join the net.

Check NFARL Nets for more information and "how to". Here's the link to the NFARL server on Discord web app https://discord.gg/spr2a9D

Every Wednesday — Hungry Hams Lunch Bunch - 11:15 AM

Location: Slope's BBQ, 34 East Crossville Road, Roswell, GA 30075 (770) 518-7000



Dining Room is OPEN. Get Take Out if you can't stay!

Every Thursday — YL Net – 8:00 PM - 9:30 PM - 145.47 MHz (-) PL 100 Check NFARL Nets website for "how to." This is a great opportunity for YL's to get on the radio with other YL's! OM's (guys) are welcome to listen in to this YL net.

Every Wednesday — CW CHAT – 8:00 PM on ZOOM.

New meeting link and credentials:

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84722087419?wd=VIN2d0xvQVhKcDIUL0R4N1hQMTQ2UT09 Meeting ID: 847 2208 7419; Passcode: CW-CHAT

Second Tuesday — NFARES Meeting - April 9, 2024 Now meeting in-person! Meeting location: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 500 Norcross St. Roswell, GA 30075. Enter using the "Family History Center" Door. See NFARL website for details & Zoom link. NFARES members receive Zoom invitation automatically.

Second Saturday – VE Testing - NFARL April 13, 2024 session: 8:30 - 10:30AM Slope's BBQ, 34 Crossville Road, Roswell, GA 30075. Seating will be limited to 20 - preregistration is required. *Registration is by email to Ian NV4C*; monitor registration opening & closing on the website. *Click here for more information*.

Fourth Tuesday – NFARL Executive Team Meeting – Usually 4th Tuesday – March 26, 2024, 7:00 PM has been rescheduled to April 2, 2024. Online meeting only — monitor website and NFARL Groups.io reflector for updates.

NFARL Club Meeting— Tuesday, March 19, 2024 — 7:00 PM Preston Ridge Community Center, 3655 Preston Ridge Road Suite 100, Alpharetta, GA 30005. The facility's doors will open at 7:00PM. Our meeting will begin at 7:30PM and should conclude by 9:00PM.

GA State Parks On The Air-- Start: April 6, 2024 @ 8:00am EDT (1200UTC) End: April 7, 2024 @ 7:59pm EDT (2359UTC). See more at https://gaparks.org/

Sandy Springs Lantern Parade – April 13, 2024

https://www.sandyspringsga.gov/lanternparade

GA QSO Party – April 13-14, 2024 2:00 pm EDST Saturday until 11:59 pm EDST Saturday and 10:00 am EDST Sunday to 7:59 pm EDST Sunday. Visit https://gaqsoparty.com/ for Georgia QSO Party information and rules.

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North Fulton Amateur Radio League

P.O. Box 1741 Roswell, GA 30077 <u>nfarl.org</u>

eNEWS can be located online at: https://nfarl.org/enews-index

Club Repeaters

Frequency—Description	P.L. Tone	Location
145.470 (-) EchoLink Node 560686 NF4GA-R	100 Hz	Morgan Falls
147.060 (+) Primary ARES Repeater	100 Hz	Roswell Water Tower
* 224.620 (-) Joint Venture with MATPARC	100 Hz	TBD
443.150 (+)	100 Hz	Roswell Water Tower
444.475 (+)	100 Hz	Morgan Falls
* 927.0125 (-)	146.2 Hz	TBD

^{*} Currently off the air

Club Call signs: NF4GA and K4JJ

Extra Extra answer: A (question E4A01)

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