

# Alachua ARES/NFARC/NF4AC Clubs

## MINUTES

**May 10, 2023**

Attendance: 15. Meeting held in person at the Queen of Peace Catholic Community and also held via ZOOM. Zoom connection was very iffy because the WiFi router for QoP was not online.

Gordon Gibby  
Leland Gallup  
Susan Halbert  
Steve Panaghi  
Craig Fugate  
Jeff Capehart  
Earl McDow  
Dave Huckstep  
Reid Tillery  
Wendell Wright  
Eric Pleace  
Jim Bledsoe  
Mike kd4inh  
Lorilyn Roberts  
Rosemary Jones

**Introductions.** From 1830 until 1900 when the meeting commenced. The NFARC/NF4AC radio club met for this month in person at Queen or Peace Catholic Community and via Zoom.

- 1. INTRODUCTION/APPROVAL OF APRIL 2023 MINUTES.** Noted that we have a Technician License course on August 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. KX4Z reminded folks of the Thursday VHF nets, Tech Nites on first Thursday of the month; Wednesday EOC training; License classes; Lunch and Lab's. W4UFL has not run the hours figures for April yet. KX4Z went over the Minutes approved for April. Suggestion: run the June and July meetings at EOC. This needs to be requested...form is on educational articles page. No decision made on that suggestion.
- 2. SECTION SET RESULTS AND HOTWASH.** [Secretary note: as the Secretary was not part of the Alachua ARES SET effort, it was difficult to follow the discussion. My apologies if I failed to capture key point or misstated any thing.] The zoom held immediately after the SET was in fact an all-north Florida. So W4UFL used this May meeting as an opportunity to do a hotwash. He did go over results. 22 total participants with 129 messages generated and received. 15 H&W messages were handled. A couple of the criteria in the exercise objectives for the entire NFL section included, for example, a percentage of ARES members participate in the SET. In the case of Alachua ARES, we had 50% of our badged volunteers participate, which exceeded the NFL section objective. As to exercise injects, say for power loss, there were a variety of responses. 7/9 stations were to have power failure, and 8/10 were for antenna failure. This was by station. EOC had three "outages." This was if the inject said there was a problem. Some confusion as to who was to do what. SHARSE and JS8 bulletin were both captured. We had 10/10 send in 309s; 8/10 for 214s. Basically we "passed" the requirements set

out for goals. Much work packed in to the artificially constrained times for the exercise. Batteries in EOC not attached because it wasn't obvious where to plug in the batteries. Wendell Wright was working comms, so he could not show the other two ops power connection techniques. Training on VHF batteries, powerpoles on the VHF radios, need to be added. Powergates would be nice if we had dedicated batteries for each radio. Craig Fugate suggested that the Powergates are there [Sec'y note: where?]; they'll also charge the batteries and automatically switch from AC to DC. Discussion: BMS in the LiFePo4 battery will take care of the issue of leaving the batteries on charger. One of the powersupplies for the VHF radios was "on" when they came in. An alternate antenna for the VHF was a suggestion addition. If the inject said all three VHF antenna are out, then in the EOC you are out of luck. Jeff Capehart noted that the 214's require a date and time entry for these forms to be useful for documentation purposes (reimbursement for hours). He also noted that we need to be more detailed on our forms, such as 309's (to whom a message was sent, etc.). This can be an issue with a message that has to be "unpacked" with a number of individual emails needing to be spun out of that and accounted for. Gordon Gibby showed a map with the number of Winlink connections made during the first hour of the SET. The template 309s capture both what you send and what you receive. Lorilyn noted that "source" and "originator" are not specific on a template form. So...training needed on how the 309s are to be generated. There was considerable discussion on message handling documentation, and there was evident confusion as to exactly what the proper protocols are. Jeff Capehart has not yet generated a list of the items for the IPP. Batteries, forms, antennae, all of these should discussed. Improvement plan suggestions. Eric suggested local NVIS for HF is a good idea. Jeff responded that the GARS group should have operated as a local HF net; information on the local VHF nets were used to get information in an out. Possible failure of training may have led to what seems to have been a failure – that and compressed times. Logger would have been very useful. Suggestion: for an activation – have four people, with one devoted only to logging. W4UFL will also talk at the GARS meeting and gather suggestions. Dave Huckstep said that he'd monitored HF, but only one person (Ron) checked in. Other issue: "shelter 2" was abandoned, and there was confusion as to who2 or would be where – Shelter 2 or Pod 2.

- 3. UPDATE ON MAY 20 GANN FUNCTIONAL EXERCISE.** Reid Tillery passed out forms that he'd prepared for "getting the message out." He needs three more "helper" stations. He went over the H&W message form. Reid defined what the "helper station" is. Need to look at the plan for what the helpers are to do. 20<sup>th</sup> is Saturday after next. Gallup offered to be an HF helper station. 12 have already signed up to participate in the exercise. Can use KX4Z's RMS to make connection. Read the plan to see what and how this will work.
- 4. UPDATE ON FIELD DAY OPERATIONS.** AA3YB, as FD operations chief (at least as to the period before FD proper) went over the calendar events relating to and moving up to FD. These included the Lab N' Lunches for the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 27, and their goals – which included making choke baluns and band pass filters. AA3YB walked through the most recent version of the 201, noting the PDFs that KX4Z has put together; these latter include the antenna systems to be used and interference mitigation. Description of the operating stations, command station, the visitor station (see below) and GOTA. KX4Z has built all the HF antennas necessary for the operation. Went over the method for signing up as volunteers, and seeing how and for what a person has signed up. Pleas for signups. Objectives for the dress rehearsal and antenna raising (at KX4Z) were discussed in detail [Sec'y note: this addresses an improvement point from the IPP from last year's FD]

5. **FIELD DAY AND ARES PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS.** KX4Z showed promotional brochure that he has prepared and printed out. Described the function of the visitor station at the public entrance, where we will have both a GEOCHRON screen to show contacts being made, and a computer with an Internet feed so that we can show ARRL promotional videos to visitors. Discussion of who would be bringing what equipment for the visitor's station.
6. **TOWER TRAILER PLANNING and PROGRESS.** Pictures of the trailer work accomplished by Stuart Reisner. Because of his fine effort, KX4Z is well on his way to having a towable trailer with removable tower! Excellent.
7. **UPDATE FIELD DAY LOGISTICS.** Wendell Wright, KN4TWS, is the FD logistics chief. Went over the 201 with the resources/requirements lists. We're assembling an enormous variety of computer equipment to support our FD operating stations; WiFi and MESH network systems and how they are being configured was discussed – thanks to Earl McDow for leading the way on this – much has been done already and we're 7 weeks away from FD.
8. **LUNCH N LABS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED SUPPORTING FD ON MAY 13/27.** See discussion above on FD prep for the subject matter of these Lab N' Lunches.
9. **ADJOURN** at 2032, 13 May 2023.