

THE WCF PRESSER



WCF Country
West Central Florida Section

The Newsletter of the ARRL West Central Florida Section

Feb 2020

Issue # 46

SECTION MANAGERS MUSINGS

by Darrell Davis, KT4WX

ARRL West Central Florida Section Manager

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**Assistant Section
Manager Administrative**
Randy Payne K4EZM

**Assistant Section Manager
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**Assistant Section Manager
SM Emeritus and Tampa Bay Area**
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Affiliated Club Coordinator
Mike Douglas W4MDD

Public Information Coordinator
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Section Emergency Coordinator
Ben Henley KI4IGX

Section Traffic Manager
Doug Williams N2DW

Section Youth Coordinator
Christine Duez KK4KJN

Technical Coordinator
Dave Birnbaum, K2LYV

**Assistant Section Manager
Publications**
Jim Weslager. K3WR

Welcome to the February issue of the WCF PRESSER. My apologies as we are running late with this issue. I have a new bus route and it is taking some of my spare time to write content for the WCF PRESSER. In addition hamfest season is upon us and TECHCON is around the corner. Speaking of content, we are always looking for good content. If you club or group did a public service event or special radio event, write it up and send it via email to our newsletter editor, Jim Weslager K3WR, our Assistant Section Manager for Publications. It does not have to be long and do not worry about layout. Jim will take your article and make it look good. Without good content it can turn out to be "Darrell's blog" and we do not want that. We want to hear from you, the amateur radio



operators of the ARRL West Central Florida Section.

This month will be a busy one with Orlando Hamcation and the 6th Annual TECHCON all in the month of February. I am planning to spend a good amount of time in the ARRL Exhibition area. I plan to help out the ARRL Lab folks with helping the "build the radio" exhibit in the ARRL Exhibition area which will be in the middle of the main commercial exhibit building. It will be a simple kit for newcomers to building with electronics to construct. This

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SECTION MANAGERS MUSINGS (CON'T)

will temporarily satisfy my building desire :-)
Serious, I hope to be able to help some amateur radio operators to begin or enhance their building skills. I also plan to spend some time in the "meet and greet" area. My contact information, is now in the ARRL Events app for Orlando Hamcation as well as on my personal webpage at <http://www.kt4wx.org> and on page 16 of QST every month as well.

Final preparations are underway for the 6th Annual TECHCON as well. You can read about that elsewhere in this issue of the WCF PRESSER. Suffice it to say that this may be one of the best TECHCON events that we have had to date. We hope to break our attendance peak of 60.

Finally keep your eyes out on the winter weather, particularly as cold fronts pass through our way. We are getting into that time of the year that cold front passage may be quite strong. If you have not do so, now is a good time to take or re-certify, if needed, your SKYWARN training. The NWS Office in Ruskin, which covers all of the ARRL West Central Florida Section, holds in person training from time to time and also they have two providers that you can obtain the training from online. All SKYWARN training is FREE. For more details go to the NWS Office in Ruskin SKYWARN page at <https://www.weather.gov/SKYWARN>

That is all for this time. Hope to see you at either Orlando Hamcation or at the 6th Annual TECHCON.

EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Dave Birbaum, K2LYV

Since this is my first column for the newsletter, I thought it be appropriate for me to introduce myself. I grew up in New York City and first licensed in 1953 as Novice call KN2LYV and upgraded to General a few months later. My first station was a Hallicrafters SX-28 receiver and an Eldico 75 transmitter which was a 75W crystal controlled, CW only, with plug in coils for different bands. During this time I worked exotic DX like Ohio! I was relatively inactive while in school getting an Engineering degree as well as a PhD in Physics, but got active in the 70's when I upgraded to Advanced and then Extra. Professionally I taught physics and astronomy at the university level for about 9 years and then switched to industry where I worked as an engineer, first for a company developing control systems for railroads, and then for a long (23 years) career at Xerox where I led the development of the electronic image processing for Xerox's color copiers and printers. After retirement I moved around the country for several years before moving to Tampa in 2012. Since arriving here I have made ham radio a big focus of my retirement activities. I'm active with the Tampa Amateur Radio Club and am on the air with a variety of activities mostly CW and Digital with occasional forays into SSB. Oh, as a sideline I play trombone, which I started in my 60s, in a few of the local concert bands.

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What I'd like to talk about this month is the interesting increase in technical activities that is coming about due, I think in part, to a combination of cheap computing power and the availability of a variety of analog RF components originally intended for cell phone and IOT applications. One of the big contributors to this renaissance is the Si5351 chip which retails for around \$1 and whose three outputs can be independently programmed to generate any frequency from around 3 to over 300MHz in fractional Hz increments. There are many sources of breakout boards with the 5351 and it's support circuitry for less than \$10. Couple one of these with an Arduino and you have a signal generator, a VFO for a direct conversion SDR transceiver or whatever your imagination can dream up.

In the last few months there has been a lot of interest in the nanoVNA which uses a 5351 a mixer chip and an embedded STM microprocessor to make a complete vector network analyzer in a package about 3"x3" in size. It includes a 3" touchscreen display so it can be used standalone or can be connected via USB to a computer. While the nanoVNA won't replace a professional VNA, the price is about 100x less and the performance is more than adequate for most ham work. If you want to test a filter or tune an antenna the nanoVNA will the job nicely. There is even some open source software to



support extended use of the nanoVNA.

Last spring I came across the QCX transceiver kit from QRP-labs. It's a complete CW transceiver with 5W output and can be build for 80, 40, 30 or 20M. It includes a 2x16 LCD display and can tune continuously across the band (and for that matter over a very wide



frequency range). The receiver is a direct conversion using two of the outputs of a 5351 to provide the quadrature signals. The whole thing is on a PCB about 3"x5" and uses through hole components (the 5351 and another IC are already soldered on the PCB). It includes a pre-programmed Atmel 328 microcontroller. Several of us at TARC have built the rig. It's quite a kick to make a QSO with only 5W on something you built. Since its introduction about a year ago about 9000 of the units have been sold. There's an idea for the builders among us.

I welcome suggestions for this column or for ideas for technical activities within the section and look forward to helping advance the technical side of the hobby, with your help.

SECTION NET INFORMATION

Here is a list of the current Section Nets that are in operation: Please feel free to check in and participate on these nets as you are able to do so.

DAY / NET	NET	TIME	SYSTEM/FREQ	NET MANAGER
Daily	Eagle Net (West Central Florida Section NTS Net)	2030 hours	NI4CE Repeater System	Dave Rockwell W4PXE
Monday	West Central Florida Section ARES and Information Net	1930 hours	NI4CE Repeater System	J.C. Rivero K4RTC
Thursday	West Central Florida Section Technical Net	2100 hours	NI4CE Repeater System	Vacant
Saturday	West Central Florida Section ARES and Information Net	0730 hours	3940 KHz	Randy Payne K4EZM

The Section ARES Information Net on 3940 KHz will start at either 0730 or immediately following the Florida Phone Traffic Net whichever is later.

For more information on the NI4CE Repeater System, including frequencies and a coverage map go to <http://www.ni4ce.org> or visit their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ni4ce>.

The ARRL West Central Florida Section wishes to thank the West Central Florida Group Inc. for the use of the NI4CE Repeater System for the Section Nets that are on VHF and UHF.

COMING HAMFESTS IN THE SECTION

February 15, 2020

Highlands County Hamfest 2020
First Baptist Church of Lake Josephine
111 Lake Josephine Drive
Sebring, FL 33875



April 18, 2020

TARCFest SPRING 2020
TARC Clubhouse,
7801 N. 22nd Street
Tampa, FL



March 7, 2020

Charlotte County Hamfest 2020
Punta Gorda Boat Club,
802 West Retta Esplanade
Punta Gorda, 33950



May 23, 2020

WORMFest 2020
Freedom Lake Park,
9990 46th Street North
Pinellas Park, FL , FL 33782



March 14, 2020

Gulf Coast ARC Spring 2020 Hamfest
Millennium Academy,
10005 Ridge Road
New Port
Richey, FL 34652



March, 21, 2020

ZAARC Hamfest 2020
St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church
5855 16th Street
Zephyrhills, FL, FL 33539

March 28, 2020

2020 SERC Hamfest and Tailgate
Sarasota Red Cross HQ, 2001 Cantu Ct.
Sarasota, FL 34232



March 28, 2020

Pasco County Spring 2020 Hamfest
Gunn Highway Flea Market
Odessa, FL 33556

TECHCON 2020 JUST AROUND THE CORNER - PLAN ON ATTENDING

Time for the 6th Annual TECHCON is getting closer. The 6th Annual TECHCON, the ARRL West Central Florida Section Technical Conference, will be held on Friday February 21, 2020 and Saturday February 22, 2020.

TECHCON will be at the Charlotte County Emergency Operations Center located in Punta Gorda.

The Friday Afternoon Workshop will be on "Introduction to Internet of Things" by Jon Pellant, W1JP, the ARES Emergency Coordinator for Charlotte County and ARRL Technical Specialist.

Following the Friday Afternoon Workshop will be the Friday Evening Social at 1800. The Friday Evening Social will be held at the Golden Corral on US41 just south of downtown Punta Gorda. Family and friends are welcome to come with you. This is a great time to socialize, talk about projects, etc. Also there is in the planning a workshop on Linux during the day on Saturday. As of 1/01/20 we have about 25



registered for TECHCON. If you plan on attending please go and register at <http://arrlwcf.org/section-forms/wcftechconregistration/>.

For more information on TECHCON you may go to the TECHCON web page on the Section website at <http://arrlwcf.org/wcf-special-events/wcftechconference/>

Information there includes Google maps on the location of the Charlotte County EOC and the Golden Corral. Some have already registered since the initial announcement in the WCF EXPERIMENTER and in a WCF SECTION PRESS RELEASE last month. Thank you to those of you who have registered for TECHCON and plan on attending.

2020 BikeMS CITRUS TOUR

by Michael Bresse, W2YS

Assistant Section Manager

Amateur Radio Coordinator - 2020

BikeMS Citrus Tour

Dates for the 2020 BikeMS Citrus Tour have been announced. The 2020 Citrus Tour will be on March 7th & 8th. Yes, that's two months



earlier than in recent years. The hope is to get more riders with the cooler temperatures and try to avoid the severe weather like we had last year.

Volunteer registration opened on the www.citrustour.org website on October 8th. We already have 16 volunteers confirm that they will be here for the event. As usual we need as many amateur radio volunteers as we can get. Amateur radio volunteers provide all route support from communications to transporting cyclist who have mechanical issues or just can't make it any further on their own. The routes will be almost identical to last year. We will be out and back to the Omni Resort

at Championsgate both days with four routes (20, 50, 75 & 100 mile) heading to the south toward Frostproof on Saturday and three routes (20, 50 & 75 mile) heading toward Polk City & Haines City on Sunday. There will be some minor route changes from last year as they try to eliminate a few hills.



If you are interested in Emergency Communications this event is excellent practice as we run two fully directed nets and handle routine, priority and emergency traffic. A lot of our volunteers have been working this event for over 10 years and some come from as far away as Miami.

For more information about the Citrus Tour or to register as a volunteer visit www.citrustour.org.





SECTION TRAFFIC MANAGERS REPORT

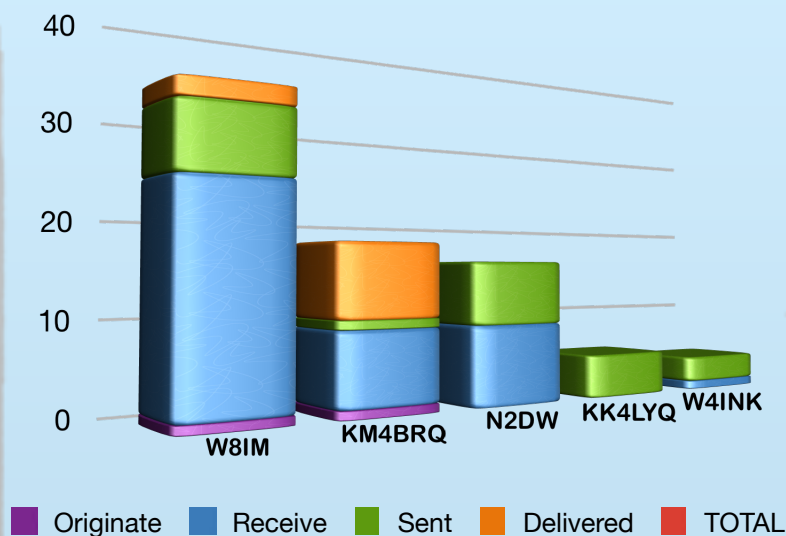
by Doug Williams N2DW

Section Traffic Manager, ARRL West Central Florida Section

West Central Florida STM Reports

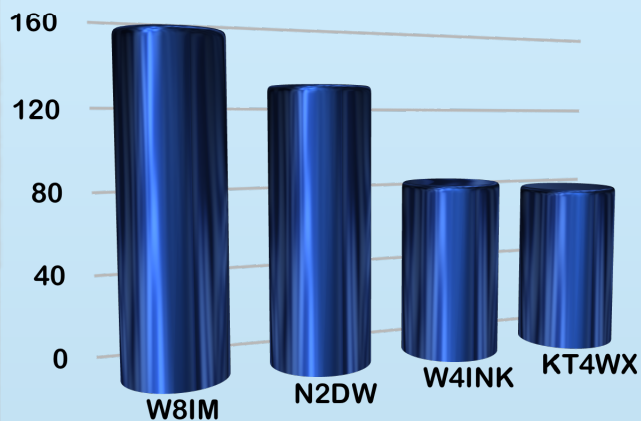
December 2019

Station Activity Reports (SAR)



Call Sign	Originate	Receive	Sent	Delivered	Total
W8IM	1	23	7	2	33
KM4BRQ	1	8	1	8	18
N2DW	0	9	7	0	16
KK4LYQ	0	0	5	0	5
W4INK	0	1	3	0	4

Public Service Honor Roll



Call Sign	Total
W8IM	153
N2DW	130
W4INK	84
KT4WX	80

West Central Net Activity Reports

Net Name	Sessions	Stations	Traffic	Minutes	Manager
EAGLE NET	31	1353	31	941	W4PXE
SPARC	39	545	39	1105	KN4LUZ
SQUARES	4	36	2	43	KB2ICN

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO ACTIVATE K4WCF SPECIAL EVENT STATIONS FOR 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE WCF SECTION.

The ARRL West Central Florida Section is holding an ARRL West Central Florida Section 20th Anniversary Operating Event to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the ARRL West Central Florida Section. The ARRL West Central Florida Section 20th Anniversary Operating Event is an activation of K4WCF, the callsign of the ARRL West Central Florida Section, in each of the ten counties of the ARRL West Central Florida Section at least once, hopefully several times, throughout the year 2020. Originally a tentative schedule was proposed for activation of K4WCF in each of the ten counties in the spring months was proposed, but this proved to be untenable. Therefore all weekends, except for ARRL Field Day, will be available on a "first come, first served" basis to any club, organization, or individual, that applies to activate K4WCF in any given county. The only restriction on activation is that the activation for a particular county must be within the county activated. The activation may be from a club station, EOC station, base station, portable or mobile fixed. Activation on VHF and UHF, including the NI4CE Repeater System, is being encouraged so Technician Class licensees can join in on the fun. This will not be a contest but simply an operating event to celebrate the anniversary of the West Central Florida Section. All log entries will be entered into the ARRL Logbook of the World. Any QSL card and or contact verification will be via ARRL LoTW. The following are activations of K4WCF that are scheduled at the present time:

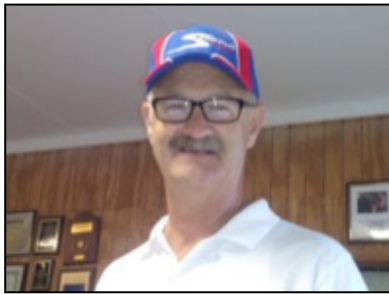


- Highlands County - 3/07/20 and 3/08/20 - Highlands County Amateur Radio Club
- Pinellas County - 3/21/20 and 3/22/20 - St. Petersburg Amateur Radio Club
- Pasco County - 3/28/20 and 3/29/20 - East Pasco Amateur Radio Society.

The West Central Florida Section is now taking applications for ARES and or ACS groups, CERT groups, or radio clubs to apply to be authorized to activate K4WCF for a weekend at a time for each respective weekend. To apply to operate a K4WCF ARRL West Central Florida Section 20th Anniversary Operating Event station in your county, please use the Contact Form on the Section website. For the full list of activation criteria, operating rules, etc., may be found on the K4WCF 20th Anniversary Operating Event webpage at <http://arrlwcf.org/wcf-special-events/k4wcf-20th-anniversary-operating-event-2020/>.

JIM WESLAGER, K3WR, APPOINTED AS AN ASSISTANT SECTION MANAGER

Jim Weslager K3WR was appointed an Assistant Section Manager for Publications on January 1, 2020.



Weslager has been editor for the WCF PRESSER since February of 2019 and editor for the WCF EXPERIMENTER since its reboot in the Summer of 2019. Weslager also designed the 20th Anniversary West Central Florida Section logo, the new TECHCON logo, and the County Parks on the Air logo. Darrell Davis KT4WX said the following about the appointment, "Jim has been doing nearly all of the work for the Section publications for the last year, so it was fitting to recognize that officially by appointing him as an Assistant Section Manager for Publications. Thank you Jim for your service to amateur radio."

Weslager, first licensed as a novice in early 1976, currently enjoys various HF digital modes, including RTTY, SSB voice, satellites, and APRS. Besides amateur radio, Weslager's current interests include motorcycling, drag racing, photography, videography, and competitive firearms shooting.

Weslager was professionally employed in the public safety sector prior to transitioning to and retiring as the corporate security director for one of the top-10 largest banks in the U.S. doing business in 20 states, the District of Columbia, and abroad. Weslager's career activities included employing various cutting-

edge technologies, many still unknown to the general public, which were used to apprehend bank robbers, burglars, and fraudsters, and included working with various federal law enforcement agencies (FBI, USSS, BATF), Interpol, and many other law enforcement agencies with respect to criminal investigations, arrests, and convictions.

West Central Florida Section Celebrates 20th Anniversary



Darrell, KT4WX and Jim, KG4JSZ prepare to serve the 20th anniversary cake.



Darrell serves up cake and ice cream.



Darrell providing helpful instruction during HamCation.



Lovely assistants at the ARRL display in Orlando.
(l to r) - Holly Roderick; Kim McNeill, KM1IPA and Enid Melendez, were all very helpful at the crowded HamVention.



Melissa Stemmer, KA7CLO at the ARRL booth at the Orlando HamCation.



Darrell serving up the cake commemorating the 20th anniversary of the West Central Florida (WCF) section following the hamfest at the Tampa Amateur Radio Club.

