

SECTION MANAGERS MUSINGS

BY **DARRELL DAVIS, KT4WX**
ARRL WEST CENTRAL FLORIDA
SECTION MANAGER

Welcome to the September issue of the WCF PRESSER.

As I am writing this on Labor Day, I hope all of you are having a great Labor Day weekend and the nice part was we did not have to deal with a tropical system on Labor Day. Just a reminder to keep your eyes on the latest Tropical Weather Outlook issued by the National Hurricane Center in Miami. There are many ways you can read and digest the latest Tropical Weather Outlook. I have noticed in the past, the day or part of the day I do not check it, is usually when something significant happens.

In case you have not heard by now, I decided not to seek re-election as your Section Manager in early July of this year, after doing much soul searching and praying about it. There have been some changes in my life that have occurred since I began this term, my third term, as



your Section Manager in January of 2019. I had lived on our family property in our small home since 2009, but after my father's passing and going home to be with the Lord in February 2018, my mother has needed more assistance than she has in the past. Her health has declined considerably since my father's passing. She was diagnosed with COPD and a heart condition last year and in the late spring and early summer began to have difficulty with her shoulder and had several bad falls. She is now doing some better, thanks to therapy and a good chiropractor, the same chiropractor that I see in Avon Park. Also, I have

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Section Manager
 Darrell Davis, KT4WX

**Assistant Section
 Manager Executive**
 Ben Henley, KI4IGX

**Assistant Section
 Manager Administrative**
 Randy Payne, K4EZM

**Assistant Section Manager
 Legal Affairs**
 Biff Craine, K4LAW

**Assistant Section Manager
 SM Emeritus & Tampa Bay Area**
 Dee Turner, N4GD

**Assistant Section Manager
 PIC/ACC Assistant**
 Steve Muller, KM4VRK

Affiliated Club Coordinator
 Mike Douglas, W4MDD

Public Information Coordinator
 Rich Kennedy, N4ESS

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

had an increase in responsibilities with our audio-visual ministry at my church, Marantha Baptist Church of Wauchula, that now takes more time than it used to. I also want to complete some amateur radio related projects and some writing that I have not had time to pursue due to my commitments to the Section. It was for all of these reasons that I decided not to seek re-election as your Section Manager. Mom and the church need me, and I will have some time to continue to catch up on some projects that need my attention that I have not had recently. Mike Douglas W4MDD our Affiliated Club Coordinator had expressed an interest in being our Section Manager, and I gave him my blessing when he submitted his nomination form to ARRL headquarters to run for election as your Section Manager. Mike was the only candidate to file a nomination form by the end of the nomination period, and was declared elected by ARRL headquarters on Friday September 4.

Do not worry, I am not leaving and disappearing off the scene. Mike has asked me to stay on as an Assistant Section Manager and I have agreed to do so. I will also continue in my capacity as chairman for TECH-CON, ARRL Technical Specialist, webmaster for the Section, helping Jim Weslager, K3WR gather content for the WCF PRESSER and WCF EXPERIMENTER, and Emergency Coordinator for Hardee County. This will be a time of transition as I will be helping to prepare Mike for his new role as your Section Manager on January 1, 2021. Dee Turner N4GD, my predecessor as Section Manager, did the same thing for me and that preparation time was very helpful. Sadly, there are many places where a new Section Manager had to step into that role with little or no

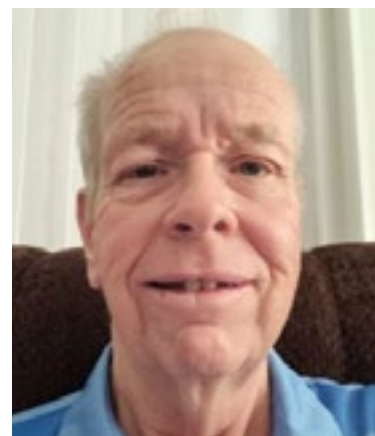
preparation at all.

I am asking all of you to give the same support to Mike as you have to me over the last six years. I am thanking all of you for your support and kind thoughts over the last six years. My hope is I have left the Section better in my time as your Section Manager. As I always say, it is not about me but it is about you, the amateur radio operators that make up the ARRL West Central Florida Section.

Everyone stay safe and well and look forward to talking to y'all again next month.

NEW SECTION MANAGER ELECTED FOR THE ARRL WEST CENTRAL FLORIDA SECTION

Mike Douglas W4MDD, the ARRL Affiliated Club Coordinator for the ARRL West Central Florida Section, has been elected as the 4th Section Manager for the ARRL West Central Florida Section. The nomination period ended on Friday September 4th, and Douglas was the only candidate to submit a nomination form and to be received by ARRL HQ by the end of the nomination period. Darrell Davis KT4WX, the current Section Manager for the ARRL West Central Florida Section decided not to seek re-election for the 2020-2021 term. Davis made the following comment concerning the election of Douglas as the new Section Manager, "After praying



and thinking about it, I decided not to seek re-election as circumstances in my personal life have changed over the last two years. I appreciate all of the support that I have received from all of you and I am not 'riding off into the sunset'. My role in the ARRL West Central Florida Section will simply be in a supportive role and different. Mike will do a fine job as our new Section Manager and has traveled all over the ARRL West Central Florida Section with me over the last three years and has gotten to know many of you. Please give him the same support you have given me."

Douglas has been a licensed radio amateur since 1991, first holding the callsign of N9OEV, and was previously almost a lifelong resident of the Chicago, Illinois area. Douglas relocated to Florida in the summer of 2016, following his retirement, and obtained his current callsign of W4MDD. Douglas became an Assistant Emergency Coordinator with Hardee County ARES in late 2016 after coming to Hardee County from the east coast of Florida. Douglas then became the ARRL Affiliated Club Coordinator in late 2017. Douglas in his professional career was commercial tour bus driver, was in commercial bus sales, and for 20 years of his career was with Educational Tours, a tour bus company devoted to providing tours for school age children of educational sites in places all over the United States.

Douglas' term as Section Manager will begin on January 1, 2021. Davis has served as Section Manager since January 1, 2015 and his current term as Section Manager will end on December 31, 2020.

TECHCON 2021 DATE AND VENUE SET



The 7th Annual TECHCON date and venue have been set. The 7th Annual TECHCON, the ARRL West Central Florida Section Technical Conference, will be held on Friday February 26, 2021 and Saturday February 27, 2021. The location for the 7th Annual TECHCON will be at the Polk County Emergency Operations Center located between Winter Haven and Lakeland. The Friday Afternoon Workshop topic is to be determined.

If the Polk County Emergency Operations Center becomes unavailable due to the situation COVID-19, the conference will be transitioned to a virtual conference via Zoom Teleconferencing.

Registration is now open for the 7th Annual TECHCON. If you are planning on attending TECHCON, please register for TECHCON by filling out a TECHCON Registration Form on the Section website at <http://arrlwcf.org/section-forms/wcftechconfregistration/>. Some of our previous presenters at TECHCON are planning on returning for the 7th Annual TECHCON, but we are looking for new presenters for the 7th Annual TECHCON as well. If you wish to be a presenter, please fill out the TECHCON Registration Form and our current Section Manager Darrell Davis KT4WX will get back with you. 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/>.

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	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	Jim Peterson AF2W
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

SEPTEMBER 26

Pasco County Hamfest - Fall 2020

Gunn Highway Flea Market
2317 Gunn Highway
Odessa, 33556

OCTOBER 9 & 10

55th Annual Melbourne Hamfest

(Two-Day Event)

Melbourne Auditorium
625 E. Hibiscus Blvd
Melbourne, FL 32901



NOVEMBER 14

SPARCFEST 2020

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



TAMPA BAY HAMFEST

FRIDAY 12/11/20

- AND -

SATURDAY 12/12/20

Coming up on Friday December 11, 2020 and Saturday December 12, 2020 is the 45th Annual Tampa Bay Hamfest and 20th Annual ARRL West Central Florida Section Convention. The Hamfest will take place at the Florida Strawberry Festival Grounds Expo Center In Plant City. Please mark your calendar for this event as this is our annual ARRL West Central Florida Section Convention.

If there are any changes as to whether the Tampa Bay Hamfest will be held or not held due to the COVID-19 situation, by the Florida Gulf Coast Amateur Radio Council, the organizer of the Tampa Bay Hamfest, a WCF SECTION PRESS RELEASE will be issued to announce any changes.

Please make plans to attend and support the largest hamfest in the ARRL West Central Florida Section.

For the latest information about the Tampa Bay Hamfest you may go their website at <http://www.fgcarc.org>.



SECTION TRAFFIC MANAGERS REPORT

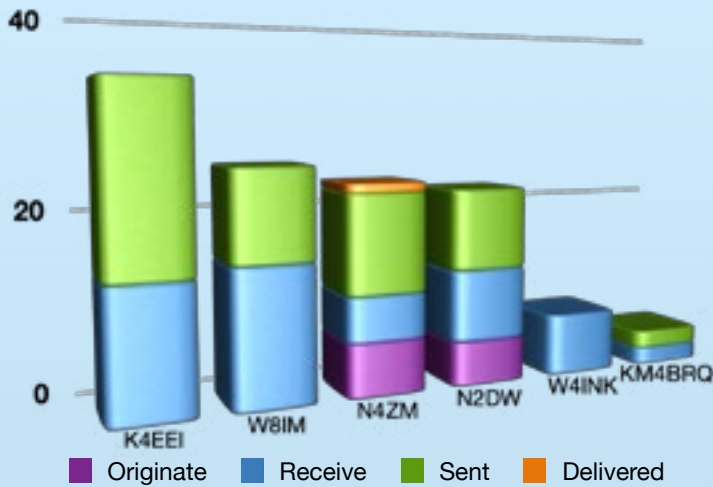
by Doug Williams N2DW

Section Traffic Manager, ARRL West Central Florida Section

West Central Florida STM Reports

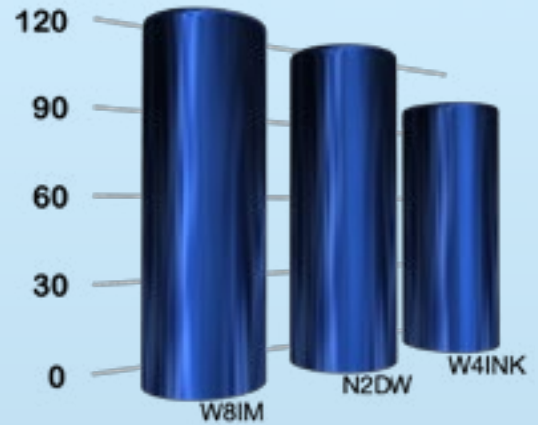
July 2020

Station Activity Reports (SAR)



Call Sign	Originate	Receive	Sent	Delivered	Total
K4EEI	0	14	20	0	34
W8IM	0	15	10	0	25
N4ZM	6	5	11	1	23
N2DW	5	8	9	0	22
W4INK	0	7	0	0	7
KM4BRQ	0	2	2	0	4

Public Service Honor Roll



Call Sign	Total
W8IM	115
N2DW	112
W4INK	97

West Central Net Activity Reports

Net Name	Sessions	Stations	Traffic	Minutes	Manager
EAGLE NET	31	1466	37	989	W4PXE
SPARC	40	670	49	1245	KN4LUZ
SRQUARES	4	72	3	72	KB2ICN
SARASOTA ERC	5	95	4	79	KB2ICN

TEST INSTRUMENTS

By David Birnbaum / K2LYV
Technical Coordinator

If you build things there is a set of test instruments you need to be able to tune and debug your newly built device. I thought I'd spend a little time talking about what test gear is most useful and some tips on using it effectively.

The basic test instrument that is essential is a voltmeter or VTVM. This should be able to measure low to moderate AC and DC voltages, resistance from a few ohms to a few megohms and possibly current as well. Even an inexpensive instrument (think Harbor Freight) can be adequate for most normal tasks. Keep in mind is that the meter is not likely to be useful for radio frequencies. In following some of the groups that discuss kit building, a common novice error is to measure rf voltages with the meter. For rf measurements a special probe can be built using a diode and capacitor that will enable consistent rf voltage measurements although accurately calibrating such a probe and meter combination is necessary if precision measurements are needed (often not).

A frequently overlooked "instrument" is a good magnifier. Circuits these days are small and especially for those of us with older eyes a magnifier is essential for things like reading the color codes on resistors



or checking PCB traces for solder bridges. I have two: a hand-held small one and a head-mounted visor type.

A really useful instrument to have in your toolbox is an antenna analyzer, or better a VNA. Until recently these instruments were expensive, and in the case of antenna analyzers, of somewhat limited scope. The recent availability of the "nanoVNA" which can make full vector impedance measurements over a very broad frequency range has removed that limitation. While these ~\$50 devices are not equivalent to a multi-thousand \$ lab grade instrument, they are adequate for much ham use and can expand the range of things that you can measure. In particular, when used as an antenna analyzer, the nanoVNA can give a detailed measure of complex impedance ($Z = R + jX$) over the full frequency range of the antenna under test. The frequency range of these devices goes up into UHF frequencies. When used in conjunction with a PC these measurements give a much better picture of how the antenna or device you're testing is performing, and yes, the SWR can be calculated. Software is also available to control the device and produce a wide variety of graphic displays, like Smith Charts, as well as the more common Z or SWR versus frequency.

If you are doing a lot of kit construction or circuit building, the cheap LCR meters that can be found on E-bay are handy to have. As capacitors have gotten smaller, it's easier to measure them than to try and decipher the teeny markings on them.

If you ask an electrical engineer, they would say that an oscilloscope is an essen-

tial instrument. Most of my engineering friends would rate an oscilloscope as second only to a good VTVM. For circuit testing and debugging there is no replacement for an oscilloscope in order to trace the signals in the circuit under test. For ham work the oscilloscope should have bandwidth of at least 20 MHz or more. At hamfests second hand analog oscilloscopes can be found in the \$50-\$100 price range. Digital sampling scopes are starting to become more common at hamfests although at a somewhat higher price. Once you've used an oscilloscope to debug a circuit, you will most likely never do without one.

Finally, in the nice-to-have category is one or more signal generators. Both rf and audio generators are useful and simple ones can be found on E-bay as kits or assembled devices. Along with an rf signal generator, it is handy to have a stepped attenuator. This will allow you to reduce the output level of the signal generator to the very low level appropriate for testing receivers where the signal level from the generator would overload the receiver front end.

On-Air Frequency measurements

For those who are interested in accurate frequency measurement, Dave W1HKJ, the

lead author of FLDIGI, has been expanding the capabilities of the program to include ways of measuring rf frequencies down to the milliHz level. The improvements are currently in advanced beta testing and should be available in the general release soon. If you're interested the beta test is open and both executables and source code are available. The rate of changes and improvements is quite rapid – some days there are more than one bug fix release! At this point the bug fixes and improvements are pretty much completed and I would expect that by the time you read this, the “latest” version of FLDIGI will include this extension of its capabilities.

Why not write for the Presser or Experimenter

I'd love to hear from readers about technical topics that are of interest to them. I'd love even more to have volunteers to write an article for either the monthly column or a longer piece for the Experimenter. There are many talented people in the ham community that have a broad range of expertise in areas of interest to the ham community. If you are interested, just [get in touch with me.](#)