

WCF ARES® Communicator

The Tale of the Self-Licking Ice Cream Cone

July 2025

Fellow ARES® Members,

Imagine for a minute what a self-licking ice cream cone might say, “Boy I taste good. <Lick> I’m totally delicious. <Lick> Everybody should love me.” I like to use this analogy for many organizations, Amateur Radio Emergency Services ® (ARES) included, that are constantly telling themselves what a great job they do and how proud they are to provide support to the sponsoring organizations. The problem for us in public service is we know what our story is but the folks we would like to join us in ARES have probably never heard about what we do. I am convinced that if we share our story properly many of our fellow amateur operators will consider joining us in public service.

How do we remedy the situation? There is value in us congratulating each other for our service. We should take every opportunity to commend our ARES team members for their dedicated contributions to our supported agencies. At the same time, we need to make our recognition programs outward facing. Rather than pass out service certificates at an ARES meeting, why not visit a local ham club meeting that ARES members also attend and award the certificates there. Use social media to show photos of ARES members operating during events or exercises and post them on amateur radio club pages if appropriate. We can ask our ARES members who attend other club meetings to pass out brochures advertising the ARES programs. Other opportunities to recruit new members are hamfests and tailgates. Basically, each ARES member needs to become an ambassador for public service operations.

Let’s make sure we carry the proper image. As ARES members, we operate much like professional public service communicators. We need to look the part when we are out in the Greater Ham community. We’ve all seen the ham wearing cargo shorts, an old T-shirt from Field Day 10 years ago, and carrying 4 or 5 radios with microphones and earpieces everywhere. That does not convey the sense of “professionalism” that we ARES members want to project. I usually wear my ARES polo shirt and tactical-style pants. If I carry a radio, it’s usually one handheld clipped to the radio strap on my slacks. If it is a public service event, like a hurricane expo, I’ll wear my ARES reflective vest and hat. Basically, I try to look like a serious public service communicator. Since I’m a Section Emergency Coordinator, I have some business cards with my contact information. These can be produced quite inexpensively on a simple color printer. The bottom line is to show that ARES means

business. It's always a good idea to have a couple of stories to tell but keep them short, sweet, and current. I, myself, am growing weary of tales from Hurricane Katrina and the earthquake in Haiti. Always speak positively about our ARES program and avoid gossiping about our more colorful members.

The only way we will have the radio operators we need during events and emergencies, is to convince our fellow ham operators that public service is a noble and rewarding segment of our hobby and directly benefits our communities and that they will be recognized for their service.

Sincerely,
Dave Rockwell, W4PXE
Section Emergency Coordinator
ARRL® West Central Florida Section
Email: w4pxe@arrl.net

Enclosure: ARES Form 4 for West Central Florida, May 2025



ARES Field Reports

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Form 4 - ARES Monthly SEC Report

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Success! The following information was submitted by David Rockwell, W4PXE, WCF SEC for **West Central Florida, May, 2025.**

Total number of ARES members:	201
Difference in ARES members from previous month:	N/D
Number of DEC/ECs reporting this month:	14
Total number of DEC/ECs in section:	10
Number of ARES net sessions held:	33
Number of ARES net sessions held with NTS liaison:	16
Number of participants in nets:	537

	Number	Person-Hrs
Exercises this month:	2	66.50
Training events this month:	20	130.00
Public service events this month:	3	70.00
Community service events this month:	1	10.00
Emergency events this month:	0	0.00
SKYWARN events this month:	4	81.00
Meetings this month:	9	139.50
Unclassified events this month:	6	16.30

Call signs of DEC/ECs reporting:

W4PXE, W4PXE, W4PXE

Activity Details:

CHARLOTTE COUNTY-----
Nothing significant to report

HARDEE COUNTY-----

Conducted three sessions of the Hardee County ARES Net: Monday May 5, 19, and 26. Had a total of 8 checkins with a total of 25 minutes of net time. Total volunteer time was 2 hours.

PASCO COUNTY-----

ARES/ACS table at EPARS tailgate. ARES/ACS table at Meat Sheep growers association preparedness conference. EOC communications course. Winlink familiarization. Stomp out Suicide 5k race.

POLK COUNTY-----

We discussed the upcoming hurricane season and repairs to the go kits.

SARASOTA COUNTY-----

5-3-25 Drill: 4 hospitals & NCS 3.5 hrs. 5 assigned stations, 11additional check-ins
5-10-25 SRQARES Monthly Meeting 11 members, 2.5 hrs.

HIGHLANDS COUNTY-----

Attended the Hurricane Expo here in the county with a display, assisted by the Highlands County Amateur Radio Club.

MANATEE COUNTY-----

The monthly Membership Meeting was held in the Manatee County EOC on Tuesday, 05/27/25. We were welcomed by Mr. Matt Myers, Chief of Emergency Management. There was a tabletop drill conducted porior to AEC outbriefs.

The Question of the Month was, How are we MORE than just "Hams?"

The Feature of the Month was, "NHC Lessons from the 2024 Hurricane Season and 2025 Product and Updates."

Official Emergency Station Activities:

KR4X-----

checked in 3 times for 3 hours to the CGCWOA CW Net on 14.052 mhz
Checked in 5 times for 5 hours to the SFL ARES Net on 3.940 mhz
Checked in 4 times for 4 hours to the WCF ARES EC/OES Net on 3.940 mhz
total activity 12 hours no miles driven

Administrative and Other Comments:

CHARLOTTE COUNTY-----

Reported by James Nelson, W4AII, EC's designee.

HARDEE COUNTY-----

Total volunteer time for May: 2 hours

PASCO COUNTY-----

No other additions.

POLK COUNTY-----

GMRS nets 127 check-ins this month. 62 Winlink check-ins this month. Added Ben Green to the staff for this year and retained WX4NEX as NCO and added him as AEC. Welcomed another GMRS user into the amateur radio world.

SARASOTA COUNTY-----

Major SHACK-UP in Florida Red Cross. Uncertain if or how long SRQARES/SERC will have use of this building located at (2001 Cantu Court, Sarasota, Florida) along with its 4 antenna towers which includes the 200 footer next door at the Sarasota County EOC.

HIGHLANDS COUNTY-----

We continue to check into the SAR Net on Wednesdays, and continue to support the HF net.

MANATEE COUNTY-----

The MAN-8 Repeater has been relocated to the Radio Division Main Site.

Call for Nominees to the MCESG Board of Directors went out on 5/15.

Testing Smartphone Winlink Apps – iOS RadioMail and Android WoAD as alternatives to Windows WInlinkExpress.