

WCF



June/July 2025 - Issue #65



PRESSER

The Newsletter of the ARRL West Central Florida Section

Section Cabinet

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Assistant Section Manager Executive
Jimmy Russ AB4KA

Assistant Section Manager Section Emergency Coord.
Section Traffic Manager
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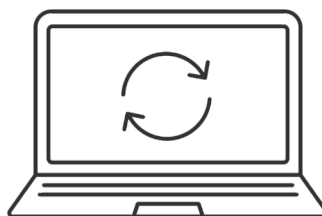
William Fetta N7CGC

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Stephen Park W4OEP

From the Editors Desk

By Darrell Davis KT4WX
Assistant Section Manager - Technology



WELCOME TO THE REBOOT OF THE WCF PRESSER.

It has been several years since we have THE WCF PRESSER. Life has gotten in the way for me since the last time, we had an issue of THE WCF PRESSER: switching from driving a school bus to working in IT at an elementary school, Mom getting sick and then passing away, etc.

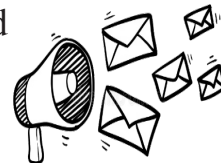
One of our Assistant Section Manager's, Russ Delaney, N4RTD, has agreed to help do the layout of the reboot of THE WCF PRESSER.

Russ is very talented with his video production work. He has his own YouTube channel (http://www.youtube.com/@spurious_emissions) and his own website (<https://delaney.rocks/>) as well, which have a lot of amateur radio information, particularly with technical assistance in area's of amateur radio technology. Russ

did all the post-production editing work on our TECHCON videos for the past two years.

I am extending a sincere "Thank You" to Jim Weslager K3WR, who provided content layout for THE WCF PRESSER and THE WCF EXPERIMENTER previously, and has decided not to continue in those roles to pursue other interests. I will always be grateful for his labor and assistance for several years.

We cannot do this newsletter alone. We need CONTENT and lots of it. We need submissions from clubs, groups, and even individuals.



You may send those submissions to me via email at kt4wx@arrl.net and Russ at n4rtd@arrl.net so we can put it into THE WCF PRESSER and or THE WCF EXPERIMENTER. We can handle almost any format you put it into and do not forget to send photos as well. Our goal is to publish THE WCF PRESSER bimonthly and THE WCF EXPERIMENTER quarterly.

Wishing you success on your amateur radio endeavors and do not forget to tell us all about it.

73 de Darrell KT4WX

New Virtual NTS Training Net



Many Technician class amateurs miss out on fun and skills of learning NTS traffic handling. The Virtual NTS Training Net (VNTN) seeks to address this problem with the creation of a Zoom-based local traffic net that can be accessed by anyone with an internet connection.

VNTN will accept check-ins and radiogram traffic utilizing standard phonetics and pro-signs; in short, participants will enjoy the same experiences as those who check into conventional “RF” traffic nets. The net will incorporate a “hands-on” training approach in traffic procedures, radiogram creation, and relay. The goal of participation in VNTN is to motivate these new licensees to join section and region nets on HF after upgrading to a higher license class.

The Net meets Wednesdays at 1900 Eastern Time. Plans are underway to move the time to 2000 Eastern Time in May. The VNTN URL is:

<https://bitl.to/3xj4>

For updated information, visit the Web site at

<https://tinyurl.com/2sud6mkm>

New ARES Section Newsletter Debuts in May 2025



Starting in May 2025, Dave Rockwell W4PXE our Section Emergency Coordinator and Section Traffic Manager, will debut “THE WCF SEC LETTER” a monthly Section ARES Newsletter for the ARRL West Central Florida Section. There will be WCF SECTION PRESS RELEASE to notify everyone when the latest issue is available for download.

The inaugural issue, for May 2025, is now available for download on the new WCF SEC LETTER page located at <https://arrlwcf.org/home/wcf-sec-letter/>. All issues will be archived on this page for current and historical reference.

Letter to West Central Florida ARES[®] Members

Summer Soldiers and Sunshine Patriots

Dear ARES[®] Members,

On Saturday, April 12, while participating in Florida EXERCISE CYBERSTORM 2025, I was reminded of a quote by Thomas Payne, in *The Crisis*, December 23, 1776, during the Revolutionary War:

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.

We had only limited participation by ARES members in the exercise. This is not the first time I have observed that for events and emergencies though many are called, few respond. Our ARES and Auxiliary Communication Services (ACS) groups have long lists of members. Yet when we have an exercise or disaster event there are precious few radio operators that answer the call. I see a lot more ARES logos at hamfests and tailgates than I ever see during an activation. Methinks that some folks like to talk the talk but are unwilling to walk the walk so to speak. If we, as ARES operators, want to continue as a vital resource to our sponsoring agencies, we need more hams to step up during training events, exercises, and real-world activations.

Here's how to be an active contributor to our West Central Florida emergency communications team. First, join an emergency communications group. This could be your local ARES team or another group such as your county emergency management communications team. Or you might become a member of the group supporting the Red Cross or Salvation Army. Second, participate in training offered by the group to learn, enhance, and practice the skills you will need during an emergency. Third, show up and join in during exercises or activations. As always, do not self-deploy and make sure your family and property are safe before reporting. Fourth, maintain your readiness like keeping your emergency supplies and go-kits ready to deploy.

New ARRL West Central Florida Section ARES Plan Published

WEST CENTRAL FLORIDA SECTION EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN 2025

American Radio Relay League[®]
Amateur Radio Emergency Services[®]
(ARES[®])
West Central Florida Section
April 1, 2025



Dave Rockwell W4PXE, our Section Emergency Coordinator, released this week the new ARRL West Central Florida Section ARES Plan. It is recommended that all ARES personnel familiarize themselves with the new plan. The plan is now available on the Section website on the Section ARES Page at https://arrlwcf.org/download/wcfares/WCFSection_ARESPlan_040125.pdf

For any questions concerning the new Section ARES Plan, you may contact our Section Emergency Coordinator Dave Rockwell W4PXE via email at w4pxe@arrl.net.

Monthly Reports are Important



The following is an open letter to all ARES personnel in the ARRL West Central Florida Section from our Section Emergency Coordinator Dave Rockwell W4PXE:

“Dear ARES® Members,

Why report should we report our activity in providing public service radio support?

Reporting volunteer hours is crucial for several reasons. These hours are recognized by counties, states, and federal officials, demonstrating the value of our contributions. Each volunteer hour equates to a \$34.08 (on average nationally) benefit to the organizations we support, highlighting the economic impact of our efforts.

Additionally, public service hours are being used to support the passage of The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act of 2025 (H.R. 1094 and S.459), aimed at eliminating restrictions imposed by Homeowners Associations (HOAs). Your reported hours are essential in showcasing the importance of amateur radio in emergency preparedness and response.

Every ARES member should report their volunteer hours through their county Emergency Coordinator. These coordinators should then report the hours and activities to the Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) using the ARRL Form 2 online or the WCF forms available on the section website, <https://arrlwcf.org/>. As SEC, I send a summary of these reports to the ARRL®. The League uses these reports to advocate for all amateur radio.

What we do is important. Our sponsors and supporters rely on the work we do. Many counties have used the volunteer hours to justify purchasing radio equipment, ensuring we are well-equipped to handle emergencies and disasters.

Every hour spent volunteering improves our abilities to respond during emergencies and disasters. Therefore, it is imperative that your ARES® hours are reported accurately. Please make sure your ARES® hours are reported.”

For the PDF version of this letter you may go to

http://arrlwcf.org/download/wcfares/W4PXE_SEC_Letter_2025-04.pdf



Pine View School for The Gifted Makes Contact with ISS



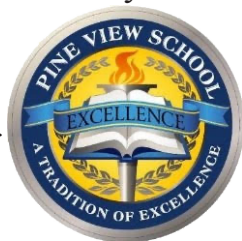
In a momentous achievement for Pine View School for the Gifted (PVS) in Osprey, students and faculty made a successful live contact with astronauts aboard the International Space Station (ISS) on Tuesday, January 28, 2025. This historic event marks a significant milestone in the school's ongoing commitment to inspiring the next generation of scientists, engineers, and explorers. It is the first time that any Sarasota County school has been selected for this honor.

The Tamiami Amateur Radio Club (TARC) in Venice partnered with PVS to provide radios, antennas, and skilled amateur radio operators to facilitate this contact with the ISS. Steve NS4P ran the radio making timely doppler shift frequency changes as the ISS

passed overhead and Brain Darley KM4YHZ from the Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club operated the ground station antenna tracking system that he provided for making the contact. The students, along with their STEM teachers had the rare opportunity to speak directly with astronaut Sunita Lyn “Suni” Williams in a live, two-way conversation. Each of the sixteen selected students had an opportunity to ask Suni a question via an amateur radio connection to the ISS and receive her answer in real time.

The event was not open to the public and took place in the school auditorium. It was attended by fellow students, faculty, parents, and invited guests. The Sarasota County School District did a live stream of the event on their YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/@SarasotaSchools>). Video of the contact can be viewed on the school’s YouTube channel.

The school now has a dozen students and one faculty member with Technician Class Amateur Radio Operator licenses from the FCC thanks to the efforts of TARC’s VE Team. During the month of February, TARC will be working with the school to install mast poles for supporting an assortment of wire antennas. Using funds received from an ARRL Club



Grant, TARC will also provide the long term loan of a complete HF station with accessories for use by the newly formed school amateur radio club, call sign W4PVS

11th Annual TECHCON Videos and Papers Now Available

The 11th Annual TECHCON was held on Saturday February 22, 2025 with about 30 to 35 in attendance personally. Due to technical difficulties, we were unable to do a live stream of the primary track.



However, there is a “silver lining” in this cloud. Russ Delaney N4RTD, Assistant Section Manager, has processed all the videos and added the speaker slides to them, and they are now available for viewing on the ARRL West Central Florida Section YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@arrlwcf>.

Darrell Davis KT4WX, Assistant Section Manager for Technology, has added the links to the slide presentations

developed by all our presenters and they are available on the 11th Annual TECHCON webpage at <https://arrlwcf.org/wcf-special-events/wcftechconference/>.

Later in the year, the 11th Annual TECHCON webpage will be archived for historical and future reference and will always be accessible via the TECHCON webpage.

25TH Annual ARRL WCF Section Field Day Caravan to Take Place For ARRL Field Day 2025



On Saturday June 28, 2025, the 25th Annual ARRL West Central Florida Section Field Day Caravan is set to go on the road of the ARRL West Central Florida Section for ARRL Field Day once again.

As has been done in recent years it is planned to send out two teams to cover the ARRL West Central Florida Section.

The ARRL West Central Florida Section Field Day Caravan webpage has been tentatively updated for ARRL

Field Day 2025. As plans are finalized for the ARRL West Central Florida Section Field Day Caravan, the ARRL West Central Florida Section Field Day Caravan webpage will be updated.

If you wish a visit by the ARRL West Central Florida Section Field Day Caravan, be sure to enter your Field Day operation on the ARRL Field Day Locator: <https://www.arrl.org/field-day-locator>. NOTE: You will need to be logged in on the ARRL website to complete an entry on the ARRL Field Day Locator.

We are asking everyone to have their Field Day operation entered on the ARRL Field Day Locator by no later than Saturday June 21, 2025, so our Section Manager Mike Douglas W4MDD will have the proper time to plan the Field Day Caravan routes.

SKYWARN BECOMES “SKYWARN® WX-ALERT”

There is a new, fresh look coming to Amateur Radio severe weather operations in West Central and Southwest Florida. “SKYWARN® WX-Alert” will launch June 1st, 2025 on the NI4CE Repeater System with some significant changes and additions.



For the first time, severe weather operations will incorporate a unified Amateur Radio communications platform. Ham radio operators who are trained SKYWARN severe weather spotters will be able to share their reports on the NI4CE Analog and NXDN Digital systems whenever severe weather threatens their neighborhood. This unified radio platform will also be used to conduct a weekly SKYWARN WX-Alert Information Net each Tuesday evening at a new time, 7:30 PM ET. This new Net time will allow more people to fully participate.

“Ham Radio has always been an important part of the SKYWARN program”, according to Paul Toth-NB9X, President of the West Central Florida Group, Inc. “SKYWARN WX-Alert is all about keeping our neighbors safe. Severe weather knows no boundaries. Neither should the communications tools we use. That’s why an expanded, unified regional platform will now be used.”

The Tuesday evening Net, at its new time, will provide all Ham operators an upfront, advanced severe weather forecast for the week ahead. This will include storm timing and location information to help spotters prepare for possible activations. The new, earlier Net will also feature weather insights and training information to help spotters be more efficient and accurate.

The refreshed SKYWARN WX-Alert effort will employ an expanded team of Net Control operators. Each operator will be tethered to the National Weather Service staff in Ruskin via NWSChat, an advanced information tool the Weather Service uses to issue critical warnings and support information, which Net Controllers will use to file spotter reports in real time. During major weather events, including hurricanes, tropical storms and tornadic outbreaks, SKYWARN WX-Alert Team members will be geographically dispersed to optimize connectivity.

The Team is currently working on adding unified repeater coverage in

Citrus and Levy Counties for all Nets and an Internet-accessible audio stream which anyone interested in current weather information will be able to access.

The SKYWARN WX-Alert effort is being led by Dan Noah-WX4DAN, retired NWS-Ruskin Warning Coordination Meteorologist, Russ Delaney-N4RTD and Toth-NB9X.

ARRL WCF Section Nets

Sundays

20:30 Eagle Net NI4CE/R

Mondays

0745 South Florida ARES Net
3940 kHz
19:30 ARES/Information Net
NI4CE/R
20:30 Eagle Net NI4CE/R

Tuesdays

0745 South Florida ARES Net
3940 kHz
20:30 Eagle Net NI4CE/R

Wednesdays

0745 South Florida ARES Net
3940 kHz
20:30 Eagle Net NI4CE/R

Thursdays

0745 South Florida ARES Net
3940 kHz
20:30 Eagle Net NI4CE/R
21:00 WCF Section Technical
Net NI4CE/R

Fridays

0745 South Florida ARES Net
3940 kHz
20:30 Eagle Net NI4CE/R

Saturdays

07:30 WCF Section ARES /
Information Net
3940 kHz
0745 South Florida ARES Net
3940 kHz
20:30 Eagle Net NI4CE/R