



The Oracle

Newsletter of the Silver Springs Radio Club

Oldest Radio Club in Marion County, FL



October 2024

K4GSO.us

Membership

Elbert Wilkinson, KQ3K

Once again, we are please report that our membership has increased with three new and one former members at the last General Meeting being approved.

Please welcome our new members:

- Ron Rosenwald, KA3DRO, Advanced
- Shawn Yeaton, N1JEH, Extra
- Joseph Fanelli, KQ4VIA, Technician
- Kevin Frisina, KQ4CBP, Technician and former member.

For those who are interested in the club composition metrics, here they are:

LICENSED MEMBERS	118		Technicians	27
INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS	93		Generals	32
FAMILY MEMBERS	18		Advanced	7
LIFE MEMBERS	7		Extras	49
PENDING MEMBERS	1		Associates	2
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS	2		Total	118

Current dues paying members will receive priority on club activities like Field Day, VE team participation and access to Perry Field and GCH. Non-members can still access the Oracle on the club website but will not be included on member emails. As a final note, subscription to the club's Groups.io page is restricted to dues paying members.

We are exceeding our 2024 goal of continuing to grow and increase member participation in the club's various activities. It is the sign of a healthy club! If you know of other hams who would be interested in joining, please invite them to our meetings, operating days or club activities. There is an online application and a link to a paper application on the K4GSO.us website. We continue to encourage our technicians to upgrade to at least General Class and

Next Meeting

Tuesday, October 15, 2024

Green Clover Hall

319 SE 26th Terrace, Ocala

6:00 PM Mentoring & Socializing

7:00 PM Meeting

Program: Basic Practical Antennas

Neil Heft, KC2KY

SSRC Board of Directors, First Tuesday, 7:00 PM

Green Clover Hall

All are welcome

Upcoming Events

November 12 — VE Testing

7:00 PM Green Clover Hall

December 7 — Hamfest

7:30 PM First Christian Church, Ocala

Setup begins December 6, AM

Silver Springs Radio Club Net

K4GSO Repeater, 146.610, PL 123

Mondays at 7:30 PM

ARES/SKYWARN Net

K4GSO Repeater, 146.610, PL 123

Wednesdays at 7:30 PM



Our club is growing and Green Clover Hall has a limited number of chairs. Please consider bringing a folding chair or two as a back up.

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Membership

Generals to Extra to enjoy the full benefits and privileges of their licenses. Regardless of your license class, we continue to learn from each other. Newer hams and members – don't be afraid to ask questions and for help.

HAMFEST

Mark your calendars for Saturday, December 7 at First Christian Church, Ocala. Vendor setup will occur on the 6th. We have received official sanction from the ARRL. Several of our larger commercial vendors have confirmed their attendance. We have great Hamfest teams who know their assignments and their continued participation is vital to our success. But we need your help to make this a success. We need setup help on Friday and our vendors need help unloading. Event day we need help with parking, tailgate, rover and other tasks. The work is not hard and it will look good on your resume. Please sign up on the club website. More details to follow at club meetings, the Oracle and the club website.

POTA

As demonstrated during the last couple of weeks with Hurricanes Helene and Milton, being able to communicate is critical to survival. In watching the news and various video reports out of the storm ravaged states, many areas lost cell and internet service and amateur radio operators stepped-in to fill the gap. One common theme seemed to weave throughout the coverage... those who were used to operating portable were able to do so quickly and efficiently. Why is that? Because that is what they do every time they are activating a park or other portable activity. They are making practice "fun".

With the Fall weather conditions being more pleasant (except for the occasional drive-by hurricane), there is no reason not to get out and hone your portable operating skills. Our state is blessed with many parks in the

Silver Springs Radio Club
2024 Hamfest
 Saturday, December 7, 2024
 Doors Open at 7:30 AM
 1908 East Fort King Street
 Ocala FL

- Grand Prize and door Prizes
- VE Testing
- Commercial Vendors
- Flea Market & Tailgate
- Food & Drinks for sale by Boy Scout Troop 439

General Admission	\$10
Tailgate—Car & Driver	\$20
Each Extra Tailgate Space	\$10
Additional Person	\$10

POTA program – either local or within an hour's drive, so get out there and have fun. Mark your calendar for October 19-20 which is the next "official" POTA weekend.

Helene Post Storm Help

Roger Ackley, WA2CZR

On Saturday 9, 28, 2024 after hurricane Helene went through, I was contacted by someone from my church that knew I was an amateur radio operator.

They had been in contact with the mother who lives in rural mountain area of NC. She had been describing the heavy rain, and how the mud slides were covering her road and driveway. Then on Saturday they were unable to make contact with her by phone. They called the local Sherriff and could not contact with them as well. Phone service was out.

They asked if I had any way to make contact into the area via amateur radio I said that I would try. I took moms contact information and told them I would start working on it immediately.

I use POTA a lot so I first went to the POTA page to see if anyone was in NC and active. I found a station KZ4RUN Mike in NC but they were along the Atlantic Ocean area of NC and the mother was on the western part of the state. I asked Mike if he had any information on the weather conditions and expressed the need to make contact to a city in western part of the state in the mountains for a health and wellness check. They stopped their POTA activation temporarily and came to my assistance taking my contact information and where I needed to make contact. Mike said he would try to get me some information. Minutes later I received a text from the POTA operator op. Mike sent me a text message with information on the Tarheel emergency net operating in western NC, their net frequency and the ARES head contact was K4RQ Monroe Hick. Conditions on 40 meters were not that good and I was just barely able to hear them and they could not hear me trying to check in.

I looked up Monroe's call in QRZ got his email address and sent Monroe a WINLINK message asking for assistance in a health and wellness check for the mom and gave them her contact information.

Monroe responded almost immediately that he had a station KK4UZP, Oliver in Whittier which is where the friend's mother lives and sent him the Winlink request with the mothers contact information requesting that they contact local officials and try to make contact with the mother.

This took a while to coordinate and as I say peel the onion but within 2-3 hours the request was in the town where the mom lived. Unfortunately it was still raining in the area, no power, no phones or internet, and NCDOT had declared most roads as not able to travel.

So now I am patiently waiting for a reply time is roughly 13:00.

At 22:23 hours I did receive a WINLINK reply that a local ham in Whittier, NC had managed to get to the home, power was on, and lights were on, but no land or cell phone service. And thank God, the mother was fine. I notified the family that the mother was fine, but she had no way to communicate as land lines, cell towers and internet was unavailable.

Without WINLINK, none of this would have been possible.

This was a true team effort with our brothers in amateur radio. I have sent replies to them all thanking them for their help and to let them know the family was comforted to find out that mom was ok and the family was thankful for the help of the amateur radio operators who assisted!

I also received a text message from Mike the POTA operator that said that I have shown him the value of WINLINK and he has it on his next to-do list to download and learn how to use it! He was sold on its capability during a storm when all other modes of communication were unavailable. He said "I want to be ready for the next storm"



Operating Day—September 28, 2024

Izzy Irizarry, KT4WA



We had WinLink, POTA station demo, and CW hands on training. A great time had by all. de Izzy 73 KT4WA





Hurricane Milton Response to Dunnellon Police Department

Carl Berry, KC5CMX

With Hurricane Milton bearing down on us in the Marion, Lake, Sumter and Citrus County area, our Emergency Coordinator (EC) Hayden Kaufman, N2HAY was deployed to another county under AUXCOMM. His #1, Gray Moffett moved into his position at the Emergency Operations Center, EOC, and took him out of contention for being acting EC, so it fell to me as the tertiary AEC for Marion County to step up to be the EC. This was known to me Tuesday night, but I did not expect what was about to happen.

Back up to the previous Sunday night. I was at a friend's house helping get his radios programmed and ready for the impending storm. No big deal. I reached around to put the HT into the charging cradle and **POP!** A deafening pop again as he cringed and I let out a scream of pain, my shoulder basically popped out then back into the socket, but in its wake left a path of painful destruction. Basically, a dislocated shoulder that was self-correcting. Regardless, it still hurts as I type this. My friend, Al, looked at me when it popped and cringed in a sympathy pain reaction and said that he felt it.

Anyways, I got through the Sunday rain, made it to Wednesday, and was pulling into the emergency room in Summerfield to get it looked at, and just maybe get a little sympathy from the staff. Just as I was getting ready to pull in, I got a call from the EOC. They had an immediate request to fill a requirement for an asset at the Dunnellon Police Department. I sent a call out with Ham club Online with the same five minute requirement that I had, but no takers. I called back and said I would take the assignment. I received another message shortly after saying I had to be there at noon.

Naturally, there was nothing ready, as I expected to stay in the immediate area, handle local 2 meter radio traffic and look after the family during the hurricane. I hurried home, skipping the ER visit, grabbed my go kit (always ready for deployment), and tossed together an overnight bag.

I always leave the 2m antennas ready to deploy in the truck, along with coax on the reels, spare batteries, battery box, laptop and all the trimmings that you really need, included in that are a headset, hand tools (crimpers, pliers, needle nose, leatherman tool, etc.), and the stuff you know you don't need like power poles, butt connectors, premade cables and other connectors, wood screws, washers (say what!), heat shrink, and zip ties. That is not even the basic list, just a partial.

Upon arrival about 12:15 p.m., I brought in my go kit, antennas, and coax. I had the radio set up to operate in under five minutes, and with the Chief's blessing, ran a zip tie through the trim on the window to suspend the antenna for the Icom ID-880. After I set that up, I set another radio up and clamped it down on top of the box and ran it to another J-Pole for VHF voice.



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Yes, you see it right! The J-pole is in a rubber trash can! As I quickly found out, the tripod made the antenna too high and hit the ceiling tiles. No good. Also, with the tripod being metal, plus the floor being *reinforced concrete with rebar*, the signal was being reflected back to the antenna. I got a crazy idea to put the antenna into the trash can with a two foot piece of fiberglass pole and PVC pipe mounted to it. With the trash in the can, the wheels, and the rubber from the can, it worked well enough to get the signal to the repeater and I could hear the EOC. Mission almost accomplished! The noise from the lights was terrible, and because it was on a wheel mount, I was able to move it around the room to get the best signal without interfering with the operation of the police activities.

All was going well and into the night we went. Cooking S'mores, laughing and having a fun time until it was time not to.

Calls for service started coming in, but there were no communication issues. Everyone knew what they had to do, and it was done. During the down time, tweaks were made to various operations, the internal network, the area map, and grid locator system and of course, me passing radio traffic to the EOC. Just as it was starting to get busy with real world activity, blink, blinky blink, blink, darkness, emergency lights come on, ***no generator!***



Names and faces were omitted to protect the innocent, ***Chief.***



My Station. Battery box on the floor



Chief Scaglione and Capt. Bray



Chief Scaglione

The time was around 8:10 p.m. and our little corner of the Big Blue Marble in Dunnellon, Florida had all lost power. The generator hadn't kicked in but, as always, the show must go on. So proudly on I went, two radios and a laptop fully functional on battery backup, never missing a beat. I made a routine voice radio call followed up with an ICS 213 to the EOC to inform them that we had lost commercial power and the generator hadn't kicked on yet, that was the *clearest call I had all night* to the EOC through the repeater. No overhead lights. It was great! I knew then that the trashcan antenna idea worked!

Some two hours go by, the storm is picking up, the beeping of the battery backups has long past gotten irritating and I'm thinking of ways to disable the pizeo alarm in them. Everyone is coming in soaking wet and they're no closer to getting the generator going. I know as a radio operator it's beyond our pervue to get involved, however, in an emergency ***anything goes, and it was applicable in this situation!*** This is where my mechanical background comes in to focus.

Many years ago, in my former life before the USAF, before radio, I went to Votech for auto mechanics, and I took several years of electronics and small engine repair, and other useful skills in school, which resulted with me being added to the honor roll upon graduation. I don't talk about that much because it was long ago, but the knowledge is still there. I went out to see if I could understand what the problem was, other than the obvious of no starting.

After a couple of trips around the large unit, in the pouring rain, I asked a couple of questions, but the obvious does it have fuel getting to the cylinders kept coming to me. After two hours of cranking, there was no smell of diesel, and the engine wasn't getting warm, like there was no spark. I kept my policy of hands off, and asked the mechanic pointed questions about diesel engines in general and made my way to the other side of the unit.

After observing for a minute or so, I asked if they primed it. They said they had, but I asked them to prime it some more. And for a couple of minutes of squeezing on the prime ball, then hit the starter button. **OFF TO THE RACES WE WENT & WE HAVE LIGHTS!** Ironically, at the same instant as when the generator kicked on, the commercial power was restored, about 10:20 p.m. The battery on the generator was dead so it was decided to leave the unit on the rest of the night, both to let it charge and to avoid a repeat. Sure enough, about 2 ½ hours later, commercial power was lost again, and it was out for the night, but we stayed dry.

The point being if **you have the knowledge**, without being pushy or showy, and if you are able to without getting in the way, share it. **Let the owners of the equipment** make the decision of what to do with the equipment knowledge and suggestions, and let them make the adjustments, **but don't you touch it.** **Remember, you are playing in their sandbox as a guest, you are there as a radio operator, and it's their rules!**

Sometimes, especially after working two hours outside in a hurricane, an extra set of technical eyes can be an asset to those who need it. At that time, they were at wits end and ready to throw in a very soaked towel & bug out to a backup location. Less than ten minutes after I got involved, the generator was up and running! Yes, I got soaked to the gills, too. However, I know that my efforts were deeply appreciated by the chief and officers at the Dunnellon Police Department, and all others involved.

After my little excitement for the night, the local TV crew showed up and interviewed the chief and they went out with them on a few calls. I was able to promote the hobby during down time by sending WINLINK messages to the officers, and pictures to the TV crew. They thought that was great and had no idea that radio had that capability. (Who would have thought?) One of the officers had a Baofeng and was studying for his license.

Around 3:30 a.m. a tree fell across the road and knocked the wires down, so I finally had some "official" traffic to pass. Yippie! The rest of the night went pretty much uneventful, and I was released at 7:00.

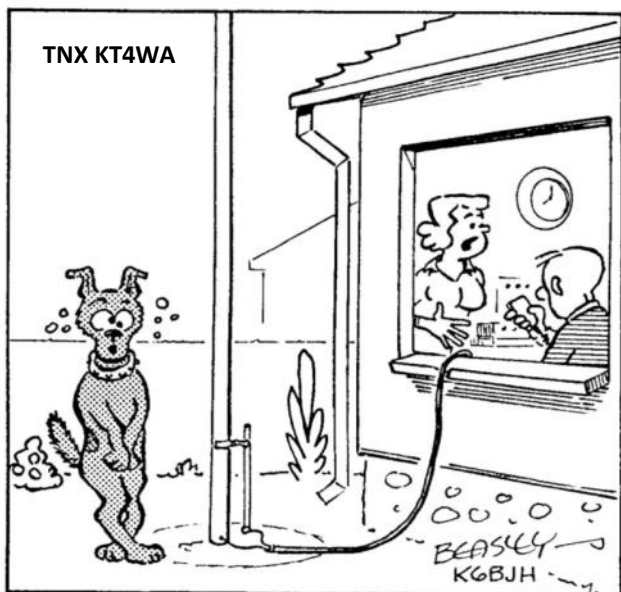
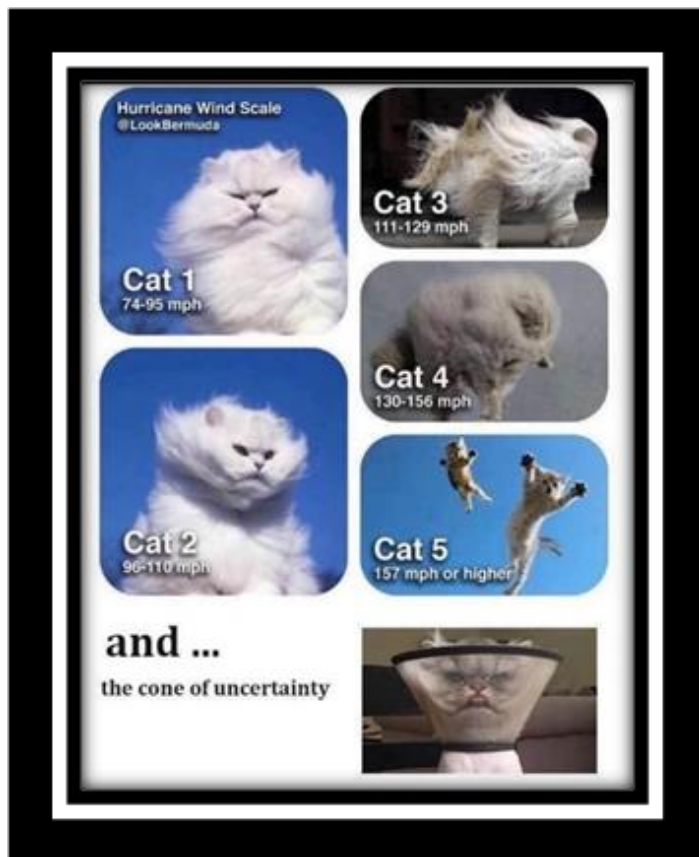
I had an informal hotwash with Chief Scaglione, and one thing I recommended that immediate action be taken on was an external antenna for the ham operators be installed. Since it is something that the hams need for their operations, I went ahead and purchased one, and it should arrive by the end of the month. A second antenna should be there shortly after. ARES & MERT have stepped up and volunteered to assist with the installation by lending technical assistance, parts and expertise where needed to the city to make it a "20 year installation" and avoid failure in five years.

After being up for 26+ hours, with a shoulder screaming bloody murder type of pain, I loaded up my gear and headed home. Everyone was happy, and for the most part, safe. The county had suffered overall moderate damage and dodged another bullet.

Lessons were learned on my part, DPD learned lessons on their end with the generator and emergency power, and we all learned how to make S'mores.

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When all else fails, amateur radio gets through. It's the operators who make the difference.



I WONDER IF LOADING THE FLAGPOLE UP AS AN ANTENNA WILL BOTHER SPOT



SSRC Has a Group Email! Have You Signed UP?

Andy Allen, NA4DA, Director

Our group is: K4GSO. Just type groups.io in your search bar and follow the link to the site. Sign up if you don't have an account and search for our group: K4GSO. You will see our group: K4GSO / Silver Springs Radio Club. Click on the button: Apply for membership in this group. You're now a member.

Questions? Andy NA4DA 212-729-0446
andy@na4da.com



2024 SSRC Officers

- [President - Adam Parker, NY5E](#)
- [Vice President - Hayden Kaufman, N2HAY](#)
- [Secretary - Wayne Peterson, AB4WP](#)
- [Treasurer - Annie Allen, KN4RIC](#)
- [Past President - Hayden Kaufman, N2HAY](#)

Directors:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Andy Allen, NA4DA | Board and Membership |
| Terry Strey, KN4FMH | Meeting Minutes |
| Tim Trombley, K8TAT | |

SSRC Board of Directors

*first Tuesday, 7:00 PM
Green Clover Hall
All are welcome*



Committee Chairs

- [Membership & Events – Elbert Wilkinson, KQ3K](#)
- [Trustee K4GSO—Bruce Richardson, WA4IPU](#)
- [Newsletter – Marty Brown, N4GL](#)
- [Perry Field—Terry Strey](#)

- [QST NFL – NFL Section Newsletter](#)
- [Silver Springs Radio Club Website](#)
- [NFL Section Website](#)
- [WA7BNM Contest Calendar](#)
- [NG3K DX](#)