

Subject: Georgia on My Mind - April 2017

Trying my best to catch up and I suspect that is a common thing for most of us. Hope this finds you doing well once again. Here are some items that may interest you. Now I can go cut the grass.

THREE NEW NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE DECS::

Huey Kenmar (KI4NDG, ASEC for NWS) reports that there are three new NWS DECs for the various Weather Service locations important to Georgia. Positions for Columbia SC, Charleston SC, and Peachtree City GA had been vacant previously. Pat McGehie (KB1WEI) has assumed the DEC position for Charleston South Carolina and John MacDonald (K4BR) has assumed the role for the Columbia South Carolina NWS office. John MacDonald is also the new DEC for the East Central District in Georgia. Jeff Anderson (KK4BCH) has assumed DEC position for the Peachtree City NWS office replacing long-time former DEC Robert Burton (KD4YDC) who continues to act in an NCS and advisory role. They join current NWS ARES personnel Stuart Chandler (KJ4GOJ) for the Tallahassee Florida NWS office, Dan Thorton (W4WDT) for the Jacksonville Florida NWS office, and Michael Mauldin (WD4AOG) who reports for NWS activity in Northwest Georgia.

BUTTS COUNTY GETS A NEW DSTAR REPEATER FOR HOSPITAL COMMUNICATIONS::

Buzz Kutcher (EC Butts County, ADEC Metro) reports that they have installed a Bridgecom repeater capable of both analog and digital DStar operation. The intent here is to provide DStar capability for their hospital operations in Butts so they can more effectively communicate during hospital drills and potentially real events. DStar hospital

drills occur weekly on Thursday mornings on DStar reflector (conference) 30B. This new repeater services both analog and DStar users by sensing the incoming transmission mode and then transmitting in that same mode. A tone-squelch is transmitted to mute analog receivers when a DStar transmission is active. At this writing the repeater is operating in stand-alone but they are working on interfacing it with the DStar DPlus reflector system. The Butts County ARES group has an Icom 880h in their Health Department office, an Icom ID5100 in their hospital, and a portable go-box for their County EOC location.

CONTINUING UPDATES TO ARRL-GA.ORG::

If you haven't been over to your Georgia Amateur Radio web page or visited lately,

go take a look: <http://arrl-ga.org>

The site sports a new look. Scheduled events such as testing sessions, club meetings, etc. that were out of date were removed and requests for updates were made. If you don't see your club or testing session information, contact Ruth Leber (WA4MDQ, Webmaster) at wa4mdq@arrl.net.

Go here to see where exam sessions are listed:

<http://arrl-ga.org/exams.php>

Go here for an excellent page on educational resources:

<http://arrl-ga.org/education.php>

Go here for Amateur Radio Clubs around the State:

<http://arrl-ga.org/clubs.php>

The Youth section needs some work! If you have youth related activities – Scouting, school groups, STEM youth activity, please contact Ruth.

CALHOUN SUGAR VALLEY HAMFEST THIS COMING WEEKEND::

The Calhoun Hamfest is taking place this Saturday April 22nd. It starts at 8am and goes until 2pm. Special Event this year is the Go Box Competition. If you have a Go Box, bring it for a little fun competition. For talk-in, admission, tables, dealers, ARRL testing, grand prize, directions, etc...

Go here: <http://k4woc.com/events/hamfest2017/>

Best Regards,

Felton Floyd, AF4DN, DEC Northwest

ALBANY DSTAR / HF HOSPITAL SYSTEM BACK ON THE AIR::

I received an E-mail from John Davis (WB4QDX, ASEC Digital) and then called Dr. Gene Clark (W4AYK, ASM, EC Dougherty County) and learned that the DStar repeater and HF radio equipment at Phoebe Memorial Hospital in Albany Georgia is fully back on the air. They have been limping along with various temporary antennas and limited capability following the tornado damage from earlier in the year which took down the 125 foot tower on the top of the hospital. They have also received some of their new grant equipment including a Signalink sound card interface that gives them HF digital capability. They are now able to take make Winlink and FLDigi digital transmissions.

TWEAKING YOUR SIGNALINK FOR OPTIMAL OPERATION::

Reported by Lee McDaniel, WB4QOJ, AEC Digital/PIO Paulding ARES

With GA-ARES building more and more knowledge on Digital Communications in the sound card modes, we need to make sure that we understand how these modes work, interface with and shape our Emergency needs. In the case of an emergency, the HF band's may be GREAT or POOR. With that being said we need to make sure that our equipment is doing the best that it can all the times. We need to understand that Amateur Radio has always been the learning and teaching tool as stated in FCC Part 97 "Advancement of the Radio Art". Some of you have probably seen this video while some have not and a refresher is not a bad thing either. New Amateurs in our ranks can learn as we all can. Take a look - I think it can help and educate. This is a Fine Video and will help you on setting up your Signal Link USB or any other USB interface. Please take a look.

<http://k3rrr.com/update-signalink-and-other-usb-digital-interfaces-huge-bug-permanent-fix-for-amateur-radio-digital-modes/>

If you are using PSK, JT65, WinMor, or Packet or whatever, this can make your experience much better especially when the bands are rough.

SECTION TRAFFIC MANAGER REPORT::

MARCH 2017

GEORGIA SECTION

Reported by Charles Pennington, K4GK

PUBLIC SERVICE HONOR ROLL (PSHR)

K4GK 120; WA0CGZ 100

SECTION ACTIVITY REPORT (Traffic)

WA0CGZ 265; K4GK 114; K4BAI 11

SECTION NETS

GEORGIA ARES HF STATEWIDE QNI 520; QTC 2; SESSIONS 4; 2200 UTC

SUNDAY 3975 KHz K4GK NET MANAGER

GEORGIA SINGLE SIDEBAND NET QNI 1815; QTC 32; SESSIONS 31 7 PM DAILY

3975 KHZ KE4VPD NET MANAGER

GEORGIA TRAFFIC AND EMERGENCY NET QNI 1077; QTC 20 SESSIONS 31

7:15 PM DAILY 3982.5 KHz KI4NGD NET MANAGER

GEORGIA CRACKER NET QNI 837 QTC 34 SESSIONS 31 7 AM MON-SA & 8 AM

SUNDAY 3995 KHz AF4XZ NET MANAGER

GEORGIA TRAFFIC NET QNI 182 QTC 47 SESSIONS 27 1:00 PM MON-SA

7287.5 KHZ WA0CGZ NET MANAGER

GEORGIA TRAINING NET (Slow CW) QNI 93 QTC 2 SESSIONS 31 3549 KHz 9

PM DAILY KG4FXG NET MANAGER

GEORGIA ARES DIGITAL QNI 120 SESSIONS 4 VARIOUS DIGITAL MODES

3583 KHz K4GO NET MANAGER

GEORGIA STATE NET (GSN) QNI 341 QTC 63 SESSIONS 62 3549 KHz 7

PM AND 10 PM DAILY K4GK NET MANAGER

Charles Pennington, K4GK

Section Traffic Manager

Georgia Section

chask4gk@aol.com

DEC / EC REPORT FOR MARCH 2017::

Monthly Section Emergency Coordinator Report to ARRL Headquarters

ARRL Section: GA Month: MARCH Year: 2017

AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICE

Total number of ARES members: * 1548 since last month= +223

reported (+, -, or same)

of DECs/ECs reporting this month: 67 , # of ARES nets active: 329

, # with NTS liaison: 24

Calls of DECs/ECs reporting: see below

Number of drills, tests and training sessions this month: 644

Person hours: 5469

Number of public service events this month: 83

Person hours: 389

Number of emergency operations this month: 70

Person hours: 400

Total number of ARES operations this month: 797

Person hours: 6258

Comments: see below

Signature: Thomas Fuller

Call sign:

KE4QCM

Please send to ARRL HQ, 225 Main St., Newington, CT 06111 by 10th of

the month FSD-96 (1-04)

* 1548 members reported, 1325 from last report, with +223 reported

by EC's

ASECs/DECs/ECs reporting

ASEC/DECs:

DEC Air Force/MARS/WB4BDP, DEC ARESMAT/AB4HF , DEC Central/WB4KNU,
ASEC Digital Communications/WB4QDX, DEC East Central/K4BR, DEC
GEMA/K5AES, DEC Handiham/N0FBV, DEC Metro Atlanta/W4IGE, DEC National
Weather Service/Charleston/KB1WEI, ADEC National Weather
Service-Peachtree City/KG4PZI, DEC Northwest/AF4DN, ASEC
Operations/KM4Z, DEC Public Health/Augusta/AH6IW

ECs:

Central:

Bibb/W4JMB, Crawford/WB4NKU, Dodge/KC5AVR, Houston/WB4EEL,
Jones/N5BI, Lamar/N5FBI, Laurens/K4DBN, Macon/KI4BEO, Monroe/KK4TLG,
Peach/KK4WTO, Pulaski/N4TUA, Putnam/N0COW, Washington/K4GK,
Wilkinson/WB4FNG

East Central:

Burke/K4BR, Columbia/K1OYQ, Richmond/AH6IW

Metro Atlanta:

Butts/K3GWK, Cherokee/KK4YQV, Clayton/AJ4GT, Cobb/N5RCK, Coweta/W1QJO,
Fayette/KN4YZ, Gwinnett/W4IGE, North Fulton/K4JLG, Paulding/K4DMF,
Rockdale/WN4JC

Northeast:

Barrow/KJ4EX, Clarke/N4ZRA, Greene/N0COW, Hall/AF4GT, Jackson/KE4JLL,
Morgan/KM4LS, Towns/W4VFZ, Walton/KJ4NMO, White/KR4AE

Northwest:

Bartow/KC4DGX, Fannin/KK4NTE , Floyd/KA5QFI, Gilmer/KE4ZX,
Gordon/AF4DN, Pickens/K4SJR, Walker/W4LWC, Whitfield/K4HYJ

Southeast:

Bryan/KB1WWW, Bulloch/KB1WWW, Chatham/K4SDJ, Effingham/KB1WWW,
Glynn/KJ4PEO, Liberty/KT4KH, Screven/KB1WWW

Southwest:

Colquitt/NX4AC, Dougherty/W4AYK

West Central:

Muscogee/K4BLL

Comments:

ASEC/DECs:

DEC Air Force/MARS/WB4BDP, If you are interested in AF MARS, contact,
AFF4GA@afmarsSE.org. We can also forward requests for Army MARS to

them. Submitted by WB4EEL AF MARS State Director . This station Had a TORNADO hit my Home in Warner Robins. Just devastating all my antennas. The 100 foot tower took a direct hit. NOT to much left usable on top. ALL my other towers were forced by the wind to lean to the NNE. Very strong winds. House was a mess also. I am trying to get data to replace antennas. I will come back but it will take some time to recover...
THANKS Clyde WB4BDP

DEC ARESMAT/AB4HF , Set up 2 videos for How to enter MAT in the database and How to create/update profile in the GA ARES database. Set up GAARESMAT FB Group, You tube, and Twitter account. Ruth Leber WA4MDQ, Jeff Cutchins AB4HF, Larry Whited AB4NX, Bill Hawkins WR1TR, and Hal Collier W4IGE.

DEC Central/WB4KNU, Participated in all nets except one. Attended AREA 4 EMAG meeting in Thomaston. Helped mentally and physically get the peach county hospital up in time for the Region J exercise and participated in net for 4 hours. Went to Thomasville Hamfest and spoke at forum along with KK4TLG and KK4WTO. "GREAT).I also took part in the State DEC Go To Meeting. .Also spent time organizing Ham Cram on April 29th in Dublin; Laurens County. Started working on activating some more vacant counties. Thanks to these guys ADECs for great help KK4TLG, KI4BEO, K4DBN, N4TUA Could not happen without you all.

ASEC Digital Communications/WB4QDX, Participated in D-STAR Live online training on 3/11 at GA Gwinnett College, Conducted Technician License HamCram on 3/2

DEC East Central/K4BR, I continue to add information to our East Central ARES District website at <https://csraares.com>. I visited 2

hospitals this month and am working closely with ECs and an ADEC. I spent a lot of time in March organizing our District ARES® efforts and things are progressing.

DEC GEMA/K5AES, 1. Participated in Natl Guard/GEMHSA sponsored table-top Hurricane exercise Vigilant Guard. 2. Participated in ARES Special Ops Webinar. 3. GEMHSA sta WX4GMA placed in storage for duration of new SOC construction. GEMHSA team ops to provide GEMHSA comms spt from their home stations.

DEC Handiham/N0FBV, No comment for this month. I am still working to get other handicap hams into this program. N0FBV.

DEC Metro Atlanta/W4IGE, At our meeting this month Ruth Leber did a program on the GA ARES database. We are working on adding 3 new repeater sites at county towers with the assistance of Gwinnett OEM. We have our annual deployment day scheduled for 4/15 at Peachtree Ridge Park in Gwinnett. We will be setting up multiple digital stations running Winlink, FLDIGI or D-Rats for training and to send traffic to other stations at the event.

DEC National Weather Service/Charleston/KB1WEI, I am new to the position, being appointed in Mid March. I have reached out to the NWS-CHS and now have access to NWSChat. I have also reached out in the form of an introduction to the other NWS DEC's and have followed that up with a similar introduction to the DEC and EC's in my weather service region. I became a certified Skywarn Spotter also.

ADEC National Weather Service-Peachtree City/KG4PZI, Mar 1st - 3 people, 16 hrs, severe events mostly in N GA, 2 small tornadoes, Mar

21st - 3 people, 12 hrs, N-to-E GA, 1 small tornado.

DEC Northwest/AF4DN, Held 2 weather nets due to severe weather passing through the county. Made contact with Gordon Hospital in regards the Amateur Radio station. Station will be relocated due to construction. Some updates and additional equipment will be needed as well. Members participated in local nets as well as District nets. Nets are conducted on local repeaters. A simplex net is conducted each week. Also a D-Rats need is held weekly as well.

ASEC Operations/KM4Z, The State SOC (OHS/GEMA) communication area will be remodeled this year. The ARES operating position and equipment are to be relocated. The antennas will also be changed and relocate to fit the new facility layout. In order to complete this work, the ARES station will be "off the air" for several weeks. Plans are in progress on how to handle traffic should an emergency require ARES activation. Tom Holcomb the OHS/GEMA DEC (K5AES) is establishing a game plan for communication operations with his GEMA Team members. Information updates on this process will be posted as it becomes available.

DEC Public Health/Augusta/AH6IW, 1. Doyle Windham and John MacDonald met with the coordinator for Doctors Hospital to discuss location and plans for getting the radios into a better place for operators. 2. Doyle Windham is working to get a meeting set with the VA to see about radios in both the uptown and downtown hospitals. There is a new coordinator who is still getting settled. 3. Trying to find coordinator for University hospital. They have a hospital in Augusta and in Thomson. They also be running the hospital in Washington. This still has to be confirmed.

ECs:

Central:

Bibb/W4JMB, It was a slow month for active storms. We did support the MARC for the Cherry Blossom Special Event Station working stations all over the world from a remote setup. Our staff is almost completely uniformed now. We all were outfitted at Cherry Blossom. We handed out over 50 QST magazines and got 4 interested in becoming Hams and joining ARES.

Crawford/WB4NKU, Crawford was busy participating in the various Digital net and VHF nets. Assisted Peach County in setting up new radios and antennas at the Hospital so we could participate in the Region J exercise, which we did for 4 hours. We also attended the Tri County ARES meeting. I attended along with EMA Director KM4MCJ and I gave an update on the new regs. concerning ARES and Radio Coms. in Medical Facilities. Had a lot of questions from Some of the EMAs and a lot of discussions with Public Health rep. that was at the meeting. Thanks to the following members for their participation WB4NKU, KM4JCP, KK4BHS, K4BCO. KJ4DFP, KM4HOZ, W1LQJ, K4RAD. KJ4RXX, K0JCP and also all the wives and families whose help and support is never mentioned in these reports.

Dodge/KC5AVR,

Houston/WB4EEL, The monthly Tri-County ARES meeting was held March 23 with seven Houston County members present. The topics of discussion included: Upcoming SkyWarn Class for Public Safety, ARES and other concerned parties being set up by KJ4QFF, Gene, AEC. Callup procedures

and deployment. DO NOT SELF DEPLOY. In Houston County the EMA Director appointed a Volunteer coordinator. ARES is organized under him. The 911 Center is being remodeled and the ARES equipment was temporarily removed. It will be reinstalled after the renovations are complete and the public safety equipment is set up and operating. The shelter system was discussed. EMA has surveyed ten public schools for shelters, but does not have a priority system for opening since it is highly dependent upon the location and number of the refugees. Pre-placement of equipment is not practical. The frequency plan for repeaters and simplex was presented.

Jones/N5BI, Our Jones County ARES group continues to excel. We are being called on routinely, which is one of my goals, to assist with public service events. Exceptional training opportunities through public service. We have changed the 443.700 repeater from Fusion to Analog only. I am moving the Fusion repeater to a new location closer to the interstate and keeping the mode in Digital Fusion C4FM only. This repeater pair is 443.4250 Mhz. Hope to have it fully operational by April 15. Thanks to everyone for all you do.

Lamar/N5FBI, Good conference call. I suggest at least quarterly calls. Projects I requested at the EOC have been completed. We now have reliable dedicated internet where we were sharing with other agencies and the control over the equipment was by other agencies during normal business hours M-F....if the connection went down after hours no one would come in to reset the router. All new wireless equipment was purchased and installed including dedicated lines for key stations in the EOC. Also, all equipment for the internet is now on UPS separate from the emergency power for the building. We have a minimum 1 minute delay between a power outage and the emergency generator taking over. I

am working on obtaining a secondary internet backup. We should be completing the installation of the HF equipment in the EOC soon. All new batteries were purchased for the EMA radios and a procedure was established with the staff to charge the batteries at least once a month. this will ensure the equipment will be operational when needed.

Laurens/K4DBN, Our highlight this month was the BYRON TAILGATE PARTY.

Yes, party: plenty of bargains to look over, a chance to shake hands with old friends, as well as an opportunity to make new friends. The “eating meeting” after the Tailgate was enjoyed by all in attendance as witnessed by the fact it didn’t break up until after 4:30.

Macon/KI4BEO, KI4BEO and KI4KHC attended the March LEPC meeting. KI4BEO met with WB4NKU and K4DBN. KI4BEO assisted with VE Session in Sumter Co. KI4BEO met with WB4NKU. Participated in the District telephone conference. I think it is a good idea to conduct this on a quarterly basis. Looking forward to it.

Monroe/KK4TLG, Training for K4XRA and KM4JEX was conducted by KK4TLG on monthly report requirements. KK4TLG attended the Thomasville Hamfest with WB4NKU and KK4WTO. KK4TLG gave a brief talk on Digital Communication in Georgia. Had an excellent time in Thomasville... We were made to feel very welcome. Several members of Monroe County ARES attended the Byron Tailgate, some bargains were found and excellent fellowship was had. KK4tlg made an appearance at the Cherry Blossom Special Event Station in Macon. KK4TLG assisted in the Region H Commex.

Peach/KK4WTO, Peach County Hospital radios are in full operations,

thanks to ARES members, Mike Bruno AEC N0HPU, John Hughes AEC WA4JGH, Rick Gunderman AEC WA4RG, Gary Grant ARES KK4MGL, John Stokes ARES KK4ZFD and Floyd Malone E.C. KK4WTO. Peach County ARES Members that participated in the Region J. Hospital exercise were Mike Bruno N0HPU, Rick Gunderman WA4RG, John Hughes WA4JGH and Floyd Malone KK4WTO.

Pulaski/N4TUA, Deployed just outside of Taylor Hospital for the monthly VHF Hospital Net.

East Central:

Columbia/K1OYQ, I just volunteered again for EC of Columbia County. My goals are to build the county organization back up to par, to become a more integral part of the County EMA, and to better train and certify all CC ARES members. I've started a web page with DEC John MacDonald's help. Once a new county EMA is named, I am going to request a meeting with the EMA and ARES to see if we can establish a better working relationship. I am in the process of updating the database and contacting all the CC ARES members to see if they still want to remain active. Some members have reached the age where they no longer feel they can be of service, so I am moving them to the inactive list. The current membership count is for active members only right now. There are some "pending" members in the database who have never completed anything except the application. I'll try to bring them up to speed and get them on the "active" list. I have no members on the "deployable" list, and I don't see very many members getting to this stage due to the training and ID requirements. This may not be an issue depending on how the new EMA desires to work with ARES. Columbia County has used a Volunteer Reception Center in the past and is intended to be a staging location for ARES members. I'll have to see what the EMA wants for ID

requirements and qualifications. I currently have two new application and will get them into the database. I plan to move the net to Monday evenings and take credit for check-ins. Great to be back on-board.

Richmond/AH6IW, Monthly Hospital net from Augusta University Hospital (MCG) working on getting a date/time to talk to the hospital coordinator. This has been difficult since I get off work about the time they leave or they are off when I have a Friday off.

Metro Atlanta:

Butts/K3GWK, Monthly training was a presentation by GA SM David Benoist (AG4ZR) on the ARRL and ARES in Georgia. Also held radio club elections.

Five students completed the General Class, two passed the General test.

A CERT class is underway in Butts County and five ARES members are attending the class. SKYWARN training was held as a CERT training session, six ARES members attended. Three of our members assisted with the Publix Marathon, W4DED, KW4AQ and KK4QJR. VE Session was held, three Generals and two Technicians. Eight nets were held, four FM phone and four WL2K, ICS-213 messages were exchanged as part of the weekly 2 meter training net. ICS-213 forms are encouraged for our WL2K tests.

Four PENDING members completed registration forms and are working on the Basic ARES courses to become ACTIVE members. W4DED and KM4HOS activated the Sylvan Grove hospital station during the monthly hospital net. ARES Membership: 10 Badge Deployable, 18 Active, 4 Pending

Cherokee/KK4YQV, Held 4 nets in March with 81 check-ins for 45.5hrs.

Monthly meeting included total participants of 50 x 2hrs = 100 hours.

Made 4 trips to repeater site for maintenance of 28hrs. Set up for GA

Death Race Public Service event on 3/31, 10hrs. Total hours for the

month was 183.5 in March.

Clayton/AJ4GT, Four Weekly training nets, 2 SKYWARN nets. One General training and planing meeting. One hospital communication drill.

Cobb/N5RCK, Cobb ARES held one weather net in March. Two people went to Wellstar Kennestone two times to set up new equipment and a new antenna (and also found a hospital installed coax problem). We also purchased a new hf radio to replace a defective unit in our communications trailer.

Fayette/KN4YZ, Fayette had a planning and doing month. WD4GTY helped (again) with the Atlanta Marathon. We worked with the March of Dimes planning the Walk for Babies in April and had a very productive meeting with the County in advance of the 2nd Balloon Festival. KI4NGD ran 4 local nets that garnered a total of 78 check ins and participated in

Gwinnett/W4IGE, At our meeting this month Ruth Leber did a program on the GA ARES database. We are working on adding 3 new repeater sites at county towers with the assistance of Gwinnett OEM. We have our annual deployment day scheduled for 4/15 at Peachtree Ridge Park in Gwinnett. We will be setting up multiple digital stations running Winlink, FLDIGI or D-Rats for training and to send traffic to other stations at the event.

North Fulton/K4JLG, Worked the Publix Marathon in Atlanta. Digital training in FLDigi and Winlink

Paulding/K4DMF, Planning for the move of several Paulding County EMA departments continues. First to move will be the 911 center to a brand new state of the art facility during April. It will also house the

primary EOC. Shortly after that, the EMA office will move to a new location and this required dis-assembly of all antennas at the old location. They will be installed at the new location once renovations are complete. This new EOC location will be our secondary EOC and will have nearly the same capability with ham radio equipment. WB3ILX and myself attended the quarterly LEPC meeting during the month. WB3ILX visited with Cobb ARES to help train some of their members in the digital modes. Work continues at the Water Department with new buildings and one of those buildings will house our primary repeater on 146.955. It is currently on site, but temporarily housed in another building. Two other towers at this location have been disassembled and some sections have been moved to a storage location at Fire Station 7. Remaining sections will be moved soon. As you can see, we have been in a construction and relocation mode the past few months. We are anxious for this phase to be complete. Our quarterly Paulding ARES meeting is scheduled for April 9. Now that we are in an active weather period, it was time my weather presentation that I adapted from the course I teach for the Coast Guard. It will be presented at the Silver Comet ARC meeting on April 4. All are welcome to attend.

Rockdale/WN4JC, Rockdale ARES continues to train from home fixed stations. More digital capabilities may be in the future. Nothing else for this month.

Northeast:

Barrow/KJ4EX, Two Skywarn Activations in March. Continued with new antenna work at homes of a couple of new hams and new to the area hams. Will be operating for the GQP (WR4BC) from the Barrow County Fire and Emergency Services HQ facilities, outside setup for ARES and FD

training. On 3/21 a possible tornado tail snapped a 80 foot pine tree (20-24 inches diameter at the break) and squashed my VHF/UHF 50 foot tower onto the back edge of my garage. My 70 foot tower survived the winds fine. Kinda busy with that and now more weather. Always have a backup. de KJ4EX

Clarke/N4ZRA, Clarke County ARES assisted with the Vigilant Guard exercise on March 24 - WA4ERS, WA4DYD, KJ5NGE and N4ZRA. Also conducted a SkyWarn Net on March 21 -WA4ERS, KM4AAA, KF4AQO, WA4DYD, KE4JLL, N4JAH, KI4TMB, N4ZRA

Hall/AF4GT, ARES groups from Athens-Clarke, Banks/Jefferson, Hall, and White Counties and the North Georgia Amateur Radio Club from Lumpkin County participated in the Vigilant Guard 2017/American Red Cross Northeast Georgia Chapter shelter exercise on March 24. Planning and executing the multi-county exercise gave the groups experience in working together that will greatly enhance their ability to respond to future exercises and emergencies. A total of 31 operators participated, passing traffic via multiple modes and frequencies between the county shelters and the Chapter office in Gainesville. All involved learned a great deal about their own capabilities and the ARES groups in adjacent counties. The results also provided the groups with information needed to improve their ability to communicate locally and regionally during emergencies. Hall ARES also supported Hall County EMA and Hall County Fire Services during their Vigilant Guard exercise on March 28. ARES operators at the EOC and Fire Training site passed messages during a lengthy simulated outage of public safety communications systems. The exercise demonstrated to the supported agencies the capabilities of ARES operators to provide backup communications accurately and in real time. The weekly training net convenes on the alternate repeater, W4TL,

145.310, minus offset, tone 123, on the last Wednesday of each month.

Jackson/KE4JLL, Jackson and Banks Counties participated in the Vigilant Guard exercise with the American Red Cross and ARES units from 6 different counties. Messages were successfully passed among the participating NE GA counties. Members also participated in the Publix Marathon for the 3rd year.

Morgan/KM4LS, We are one step closer to having a permanent antenna set up for the annual Camp Twin Lakes - Rutledge, Spin for Kids event (Sunday, October 15, 2017). Budget has been approved for a GB9 with elevated mast. This worked great last year, hitting Covington, Conyers, Monroe, Eatonton and Madison from way out in SW Morgan County. All area hams interested in returning and/or participating for this year's 900 rider event, please contact Bill Ronay, KM4LS, EC Morgan County ARES, WR4MC, at km4ls@arrl.net.

Towns/W4VFZ, Due to lack of participation in our local VHF nets, and/or drills, meetings, etc., I found it necessary to "clean house" and remove any ARES members who did not meet requirements as an ARES member. Our local Mountain Amateur Radio Club was honored to have Bret Smith make an excellent presentation on the GAH911.org system, regarding the requirement for all hospitals (nation-wide) to install amateur radio equipment by November of this year. It appears that many hospitals are NOT aware of this requirement.

Walton/KJ4NMO, We continued to prepare for the upcoming annual Tony Serrano Century Ride. We will provide communications from the SAG vehicles, Roaming vehicles and Rest Areas.

White/KR4AE, White County ARES participated in the Vigilant Guard exercise along with 6 other counties on 3/24. We provided all communications for the Red Cross from the White County shelter to their district headquarters in Gainesville. We also provided communications from the shelter to our local EOC which was very impressed with our ARES group. We had 10 members involved and all of them delivered traffic on vhf , hf phone and hf digital . We had members operating from the shelter where we had two rigs and two antennas. Three members operated from our station at the EOC on vhf, hf and dstar plus we had three ops handling all digital hf communications at their home QTH. I would like to think Ron Harris- AF4GT, EC Hall county, for coordinating this exercise and also Mike Reiman, Disaster Program Manager, Red Cross, Gainesville . Our ARES group really enjoyed participating and I am very proud of them and all the hard work they put into the event.

Northwest:

Bartow/KC4DGX, Charles Evans had 8 hours for scouting out the area for the death race.

Fannin/KK4NTE, Fannin County has had a change in the position of EC. N4AIR - Paul Russell stepped down and KK4NTE - Joe Owens was asked to step into the EC position. Also, WW4MSK -- Wally Wilhoitte is assigned as a new AEC for Fannin County. Fannin County ARES participated in county wide disaster drill/exercise planning, tabletop exercise/planning for the American Red Cross Shelter Drill that will take place on April 12th. Planning and preparation for the Georgia Death Race April 1-2. Activities in refurbishing and preparing for a new antenna tower at the Fannin County Hospital. Fannin County continues to train its members for Emergency Communications.

Floyd/KA5QFI, Two Severe weather Nets averaging 30 check ins each. Applied for Floyd Medical Center Radio Call sign. Represented NW Georgia Public Health District 1-1 on D Star net at NWGPH EOC Thursday mornings nets. Upgraded EOC D Star Radios. Member of Floyd County Local Emergency Planning Committee representing Northwest Georgia Radio, which meets quarterly. Club purchased and presented to Chattooga High School Special Needs program a new MFJ practice code key.

Gilmer/KE4ZX, March 15, ARES members Jody Huneycutt K4EPH, David Ross KK4NTC, Don Nickle KK4HJP, and Gilmer County EC Jim Hadder KE4ZX attended a four hour GEMA/Homeland Security Training Class on ICS/EOC Interface. This class should be a requirement for ALL ARES Officers. Later in the month; March 21; a Severe Thunderstorm Advisory had been issued by the National Weather Service. Gilmer and sounding counties were in the path of the impending severe weather. GILMER ARES deployed to the Gilmer County Emergency Operation Center to stage as an Auxiliary Communications resource for the county. David Ross, KK4NTC Gilmer ARES AEC activated the W4HHH 145.170 repeater for a Weather Net. Several EARS Club member's checked in with weather reports. Meantime, as the storm traveled through the county, the EOC and Gilmer County 911 Center received reports of wide spread downed power lines, trees down on the counties major roads and some minor flooding. Fortunately, no injuries were reported.

Gordon/AF4DN, Held 2 weather nets due to severe weather passing through the county. Made contact with Gordon Hospital in regards the Amateur Radio station. Station will be relocated due to construction. Some updates and additional equipment will be needed as well. Members participated in local nets as well as District nets. Nets are conducted

on local repeaters. A simplex net is conducted each week. Also a D-Rats net is held weekly as well.

Walker/W4LWC, TSARC upgraded to a Fusion 2 meter repeater and new antenna on the repeater site (High Point, on Lookout Mountain) during the middle of this month. On March 28, Jody Carter (Walker County EC) and 4 students from LaFayette Middle School went to the Cleveland (TN) Amateur Radio Club to discuss "Amateur Radio in Schools". We are saddened to report the death of our local Walker County CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) president, Mary Perry after an extended and courageous fight with cancer. Mary was very important to the formation of numerous CERT groups across Northwest Georgia. Mary was pivotal in promoting Amateur Radio among our local members. Under Mary's leadership, Walker County CERT promoted and coordinated our local Field Day events for many years, making it a training event for Walker CERT and a public held at Fire Station 1 in Rock Spring. She was a devoted wife, mother, and friend. She will be missed. Visitation will be held from 4-8 on Tuesday, April 4 at Wilson Funeral Home in Chickamauga, GA.

Whitfield/K4HYJ, March was characterized by bad weather as evidenced by 3 Skywarn weather nets. March 21 was especially bad with 2 weather nets that evening with over 3 dozen check-ins. The local packet net continues to grow as we work on a round table protocol. We are learning as more stations participate where the point-to-point paths exist and what power/antenna combos to use. Significant work was accomplished on another digi to serve the Whitfield and Murray County areas. We ended March with preparations for the Georgia Death Race on April 1st and 2nd. Whitfield has the responsibility for the Vogel State Park starting line and the subsequent aid station at White Oak Stomp.

Southeast:

Bryan/KB1WWW, Combined county operations Bryan, Bulloch, Effingham and Screven

Bulloch/KB1WWW, Combined county operations. Bulloch, Bryan, Effingham, Screven

Chatham/K4SDJ, This has been a busy month for Chatham County ARES. We first has the EOC activation in support of the St. Patrick's Day Parade which had a total of 7 volunteers on the parade route relaying information back to the EOC and in the EOC itself. Then on Thursday March 23, Region J held a Full Scale Hurricane Exercise with all of the hospitals in the region participating along with the RCH in Region D and Operators from Region F who were available to act as the operators for Region D. We were then able to help GEMA with an HF radio test of the coastal counties.

Effingham/KB1WWW, Combined county operations. Bulloch, Bryan, Effingham, Screven

Glynn/KJ4PEO, We are establishing a net in the next week. We are in talks with the EMS director about getting equipment moved to a different location instead of being in the 911 center. I have also established a place for us to hold our hurricane conference.

Liberty/KT4KH, No local net this month only checked in to those nets listed. Participated in Region J Hospital HUREX on the 23rd.

Screven/KB1WWW, Combined county operations. Bulloch, Bryan, Effingham,
Screven

Southwest:

Colquitt/NX4AC, Representatives from the Colquitt County ARES group met with the EMA for Colquitt Regional Medical Center. Ms. Rita Gay was very receptive to the inclusion of amateur radio for the hospital's backup communications. The problems associated with the amateur radio station seem to be resolved for the most part. I would like to thank the AEC for Public Health, Max KC4RAG, for spearheading the efforts at the hospital. Ms. Gay approved the ARES group to receive hospital badges for unlimited access into the radio station location. She also indicated that the station may receive improvements as suggested in the equipment list provided by Bret Smith, W4HBS. The immediate concern is getting the HF station on the digital modes. A Signalink with cables has been procured. The hospital may be able to provide a laptop. Echolink is actively being pursued as a variation into communications around the area. Phil KB4JZ has acquired a PiGate, Raspberry Pi and TNC, to provide emergency emails to the public as 3rd party traffic. This will be setup as a portable station in case of an emergency. Thank you to everyone who came to the Great Southern Hamfest held in Thomasville. Special thanks to David AG4ZR, Sonny, WB4NKU, Bob KK4TLG, Floyd KK4WTO, and Dr. Clark W4AYK for their attendance. We hope to see everyone next year. NX4AC - Andy Clark, EC Colquitt

Dougherty/W4AYK, 2017 Albany Marathon Run March 4 was supported well by W4MM Club with no major injuries by runners or Club Radio Operators.

West Central:

Muscogee/K4BLL, 3/5: State Hospital Net, HF okay, still no DSTAR
repeater linking 3/7: Met with hospital rep to survey HF antenna
options 3/7: Completed online BMX Skywarn Training 3/17: Met with EMA
re SAR event planning (2 participants) 3/25: EMA mobile command truck
antenna/radio maintenance gathering

ARRL Georgia Section

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