



# THE COMMUNICATOR

Newsletter of the TAMAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Incorporated 30 November 1984 – Venice, Florida  
Mailing Address: 1419 E. Manasota Beach Rd., Englewood, FL 34223-6341  
W4AC Repeater – 444.100 MHz & 146.805 MHz(-) w/100 Hz PL  
Web Site – <http://tamiamiarc.org>



-- APRIL 2013 --

## -- PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE --

April is here and our Club's active season has arrived at a point where we either support our community activities or we sit home and dream of what could have been. The many stories of what Hams can do in emergency communications during disasters are touted each year and make very impressive press releases. This impresses the general public but it is only viable if the local hams are willing to expend the effort. ARE WE READY? From the TARC membership that seems not to be the case. With a membership of over fifty the number of members who have volunteered to work at the Annual Sharks Tooth Festival is less than an amount worthy of mention. Have you offered your time and effort yet? If not, please consider lending a hand.

I have been having talks with other hams who are involved in Amateur Television and other activities not evident in any of the local clubs. One that impressed me was following the "Voyager Space Mission." We all can get very excited about reaching a distant DX location. This is especially true when there are so few others able to accomplish this goal. How many times have you found one of these stations, but found yourself unable to get a response?. It is a 1590 lb. space probe that, depending on which group you give credence to, is now on the verge of leaving our solar system or has just left it. While you can't talk with it using our type of equipment, you can listen to the exchanges with Earth control. I was able to copy a bit and I have attached what I was able capture: "djieu eostj woiuc si-tsa prifl oolsd aygot chao yallx" With just a little work I was able to decipher this small section.

73 to All, Fred-KJ4TNI

## -- APRIL MEETING --

Our meeting will start at **7:00 PM** on Wednesday, **10 April 2013** at the Coast Guard Auxiliary Training Center, 1200 South Harbor Drive. Tom Fraser-AK4ZM will offer a program on Admiral Richard E. Byrd. Byrd used early Collins Radios to send AM signals from Antarctica in 1934.

## -- W4VHS AT SRQ HALF MARATHON --



Members of the Venice High School W4VHS Radio Club provided support to the runners in the 17 March First Watch Sarasota Half Marathon and Relay. Shown are (l-r) Tom Carello, TARC member Craig Hurley-KK4OLP, Bailey Greenwood and Paul Lesko-KK4HCP. Well done, guys—you can be an inspiration to all of us "old timers."

## -- SPARKS --

*TNX to Andy Durette-KB1HIP for the following words of advice from "Sparks", an article by John Dunn, 11 March 2013, <http://www.edn.com>*

An antenna for the 40-meter band is a pretty large thing. A half-wave dipole antenna is around 66 feet long from end to end. Mine was center fed with RG-11/U coaxial cable terminated with a PL-259 connector at the transmitter end of the coaxial cable.

One day, I had disconnected that cable from my transmitter for some reason or other and just left the open PL-259 sitting there. Thunderstorms started rolling through. Suddenly I noticed a sound. It was "snap.....snap.....snap....snap.." and so on at a varying rate. I couldn't imagine what it was until I saw the open PL-259. There were quite energetic sparks jumping

See **Sparks**, page 4

## TAMIAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

### Minutes of the Meeting

13 March 2013

President Fred Lathwood-KJ4TNI called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM and, following a flag salute, introductions were made all around. Peter Boers-KV4LR was welcomed as a new Extra Class licensee and member, and Dennis Leach-KG4SBG from Port Charlotte, Pat Marx-KA8MMG from Venice, and Jim Dirksen-W8MDM from Sarasota were welcomed as visitors.

**MINUTES** – Fred requested a motion to accept the minutes of the 13 February meeting as published in the March issue of *The Communicator*. Dave Gill-K4JDG so moved, seconded by Bob Marchese-K1NOK, and passed.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – There was no correspondence during the past month.

**TREASURER'S REPORT** – Treasurer Don Jansen-KI4VGE read the Treasurer's Report for February. The starting balance was \$3414.14. Receipts were \$230.00 from membership dues, \$100.00 from Don Watson-K9DDO for sale of donated equipment, \$35.00 from Roger Schmitt-KY4RS and John Donnelly-KY4JD for purchase of donated equipment, \$16.00 from the February meeting 50/50, and a \$16.00 donation from Edith Norby, winner of that 50/50, totaling \$397.00. Expenses were \$11.10 to Birch Communications for Internet service. The ending balance is \$3800.04. Bruce Brown-WA8IQF moved for acceptance of the report, seconded by Bob Avrutik-N1RA, and passed.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**SUNSHINE** – It was reported that Bob Sullenger-K1RCS passed away on 05 March 2013. A number of TARC members paid their respects at the funeral home 08 March and the church service 09 March.

**VE TESTING** – There were four candidates at our 09 March VE session. Two Techs upgraded to General, one General upgraded to Extra, and Peter Boers came in a civilian and went out with an Extra Class CSCE and as a member of the TARC. Peter received a round of applause for his achievement.

**REPEATER/TECHNICAL** – Both repeaters are operational.

**PUBLICITY/MEMBERSHIP** – San Yoder-K3SY advised that following the 28 February end of the grace we have 52 paid members and five Life Members, for a total of 57 members.

**NET OPERATIONS** – The 440 Net seems to be the most active. Fred asked a show of hands

from those who can operate 440 and how many can operate two meters. Many more hands went up in comparison with our nets' attendance.

**LIAISON TO QCWA** – There were 23 members, spouses and friends present at the 06 March luncheon at Denny's on Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota. The program was a "No Program Program" PP presentation by Hans Napfel-WB2ZZB relating to island hopping in Hawaii. This was just the first segment of a South Pacific cruise Hans and Lisa took recently. All are welcome to join us the first Wednesday of the month around 11:15 AM.

**OLD BUSINESS** – Fred-KJ4TNI passed around two forms for members to sign up for participation as monitors for the Sharks Tooth 10-K Run on 13 April and/or operation of K4S from the Sharks Tooth Festival site or from home. Operation of K4S should be more satisfactory as remote power sources are being installed, which should eliminate generator QRM, and Andy Durette-KB1HIP has purchased a 2-element triband beam for use at the site. A second antenna should be in place such that both SSB and digital operations can be conducted simultaneously with two transceivers.

**NEW BUSINESS** – Fred presented Jack Sproat-W4JS with an ARRL VE pin in recognition of his years of service as the VE Team Liaison.

**COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR** – Jim Shortill-KJ4NDO asked if there would be a practice session for those who will monitor the 10-K Sharks Tooth Run. Fred replied that Stew Haag-W4MO would be furnishing the 440 HTs and that Stew would coordinate both a practice session and the actual race monitoring. When asked what the monitors are to do, Fred gave a brief rundown, including that a monitor should call 911 if a runner experiences an injury that requires medical attention.

**ADJOURNMENT** – A motion to adjourn at 7:29 PM was made by Bruce Brown-WA8IQF, seconded by Bob Avrutik-N1RA, and passed. There were 22 members and three visitors present.

**PROGRAM** – Hans Napfel-WB2ZZB showed the video of the 2011 Micro-Lite Penguins DXpedition Team putting VP8ORK on the air from the South Orkney Islands.

Jack Sproat-W4JS  
Secretary

*Plan to be spontaneous tomorrow.*

## CURRENT/UPCOMING DX ACTIVITY & PROPAGATION HIGHLIGHTS

CURRENT and/or SCHEDULED DX ACTIVITY										
COUNTRY – CALL SIGN	ACTIVITY PERIOD	BEARING	HF BANDS and BEST OPENING TIMES (UTC)							
			80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10
Tonga – A3EAQ; by SP5EAQ, ++	Now to 16 Apr	253	<b>05-12</b>	<b>04-13</b>	<b>03-14</b>	<b>00-15</b>	<b>17-05</b>	<b>18-04</b>	<b>18-02</b>	<b>19-00</b>
Minami Torishima – JD1/JG8NQJ; **	Now to 15 April	308	--	--	--	--	<b>20-03</b>	<b>21-00</b>	21-00	21-22
Sudan – ST2SF – All modes	Now to 15 April	66	--	<b>22-05</b>	<b>22-05</b>	<b>18-02</b>	<b>11-00</b>	<b>12-23</b>	14-21	16-20
Cocos Keeling – VK9CZ; Scottish team	Now to 13 Apr	3	NO	NO	NO	<b>11-14</b>	<b>13-20</b>	<b>17-20</b>	16-20	16-20
Mayotte – TO7BC; by DL7BC	Now to 12 Apr	85	<b>23-03</b>	<b>22-04</b>	<b>22-05</b>	<b>20-04</b>	<b>15-00</b>	<b>12-23</b>	<b>15-20</b>	15-20
Mayotte – FH/DL7BC	Now to 12 Apr	85	<b>23-03</b>	<b>22-04</b>	<b>22-05</b>	<b>20-04</b>	<b>15-00</b>	<b>12-23</b>	<b>15-20</b>	15-20
Mariana Is – KH0/R0FA, KH0/RA0FU	Now to 04 Apr	306	<b>08-11</b>	<b>07-13</b>	<b>07-13</b>	<b>03-16</b>	<b>13-03</b>	<b>20-01</b>	21-01	21-01
Singapore – 9V1/GORCI; spare time op.	01 to 12 April	347	NO	NO	11-12	11-13	<b>13-01</b>	<b>14-19</b>	16-19	16-19
South Cook Is – E51DXX; by AG1LE	01 to 13 April	246	<b>04-12</b>	<b>03-13</b>	<b>02-14</b>	<b>23-13</b>	<b>17-04</b>	<b>17-04</b>	<b>17-23</b>	18-22
Micronesia – V63XG; ** SSB, RTTY, JT65	03 to 11 April	293	<b>08-12</b>	<b>07-13</b>	<b>06-13</b>	<b>03-16</b>	<b>13-03</b>	<b>20-02</b>	20-01	20-01
Seychelles – S79VJG; by G0VJG	04 to 16 April	68	<b>23-02</b>	<b>23-03</b>	<b>22-04</b>	<b>20-04</b>	<b>18-23</b>	<b>17-23</b>	16-21	16-21
Corsica – TK/G4BKI; “tentative operation”	04 to 18 April	51	<b>00-06</b>	<b>22-07</b>	<b>21-06</b>	<b>11-01</b>	<b>11-23</b>	<b>14-22</b>	15-21	15-21
Samoa – 5W0M; all bands/modes by DL team	04 to 18 April	257	<b>05-12</b>	<b>03-13</b>	<b>03-14</b>	<b>12-07</b>	<b>13-05</b>	<b>17-04</b>	<b>18-00</b>	18-22
Reunion Is – FR/F5MNV; **	06 to 29 April	91	<b>23-03</b>	<b>23-03</b>	<b>22-04</b>	<b>20-05</b>	17-23	17-23	16-21	15-17
Tanzania – 5H3MB; spare time operation	07 Apr – 08 May	83	<b>00-04</b>	<b>23-05</b>	<b>22-05</b>	<b>19-04</b>	<b>16-00</b>	<b>14-23</b>	16-21	16-21
Lord Howe Is – VK9LT; by W6NV	10 to 15 April	249	<b>06-12</b>	<b>05-13</b>	<b>05-13</b>	<b>02-13</b>	<b>19-06</b>	<b>20-05</b>	<b>21-02</b>	21-02
Micronesia – V63DX, V63T; JA operators	15 to 20 April	293	<b>08-12</b>	<b>07-13</b>	<b>06-13</b>	<b>03-15</b>	<b>19-04</b>	<b>20-01</b>	20-02	20-02
Tanzania – 5H1DX; by DF8DX	20 to 28 April	83	<b>00-04</b>	<b>23-05</b>	<b>22-05</b>	<b>19-04</b>	<b>16-00</b>	<b>14-23</b>	16-21	16-21
Ogasawara – JD1BMH; all modes	22 Apr – 04 May	317	--	<b>08-12</b>	<b>07-13</b>	<b>04-15</b>	<b>21-01</b>	21-03	21-03	NO
Maldives – 8Q7KP; by VU2PAI & W4VKU	23 to 30 April	41	<b>00-01</b>	<b>23-01</b>	<b>23-02</b>	<b>20-03</b>	<b>16-20</b>	16-20	14-20	NO
Tokelau – ZK3N; all modes, DL Team	25 Apr – 08 May	262	<b>05-12</b>	<b>03-13</b>	<b>03-14</b>	<b>11-08</b>	<b>12-06</b>	<b>17-04</b>	18-23	18-23
Tunisia – TS8IT; all modes, big Italian team	27 Apr – 04 May	57	<b>23-05</b>	<b>22-07</b>	<b>21-08</b>	<b>10-06</b>	<b>11-01</b>	<b>13-01</b>	13-01	16-18
Ogasawara – JD1BLY; all modes	28 Apr – 04 May	317	--	<b>08-12</b>	<b>07-13</b>	<b>04-15</b>	<b>13-01</b>	21-03	21-03	NO
Ogasawara – JD1BLC, JD1YBT; all modes	28 Apr – 05 May	317	<b>09-11</b>	<b>08-12</b>	<b>07-13</b>	<b>04-15</b>	<b>13-01</b>	21-03	21-03	NO
Tunisia – TS8TI; International team	29 Apr – 06 May	57	<b>23-05</b>	<b>22-07</b>	<b>21-08</b>	<b>10-06</b>	<b>11-01</b>	<b>13-01</b>	13-01	16-18

Updated 27 March based on the 27 March *The Weekly DX*, the 27 March *QRZ DX*, and the NG3K Amateur Radio Contest/DX Page, <http://www.ng3k.com>

**Notes:** Time in bold =h Bands with 75-100% opening; ??? = Call Sign not yet known; ++ = Mostly Phone; \*\* = Mostly CW; NO = No Opening forecast. Long Path bearings and opening times are underlined. All forecasts calculated using *W6ELProp V.2.60* propagation software, available to download at <http://www.qsl.net/w6elprop/>. Solar Flux and K-index varied by date in accordance with USAF 45-Day A/P Forecast.

### -- MARCH SOLAR ACTIVITY --

The Solar Flux ranged from 92 to 126, with a mean value of 111.4 (vs. 115.1 for March 2012 and 115.7 for March 2011), and the A-index was  $\geq 7$  on 12 days. The sunspot number through 30 March ranged from 35 to 133, with a mean of 80.5. Sunspot Regions 1683 to 1710 were active, with three M-class and 49 C-class flares.

### -- APRIL FORECAST --

Solar activity is expected to be at very low to low levels during April with a slight chance of M-class flares 01-13 April when old Regions 1692, 1696 and 1698 return to the visible disk.

No proton events are expected at geosynchronous orbit.

The greater than 2 MeV electron flux at geosynchronous orbit is expected to be normal to moderate levels other than 01-04 April due to recurrent coronal hole high speed steam effects.

The geomagnetic field should be at mostly quiet levels with the exception of 23-26 April when recurrent CH HSS are expected to be geoeffective.

The Solar Flux should range from 90 to 125 and average 110.5 during April.

(From NOAA Weekly Highlights and Forecasts, 25 March 2013, NOAA 27-day Space Weather Outlook Table, 25 March 2013, and 45 Day AP Forecast, USAF, 25 March 2013)

### -- BACK IN BUSINESS AT W4JS --



After a void of several months, the beams at W4JS are back in business once again. The 4-element SteppIR was retrofitted with the 30/40 meter driven element which has already proven its worth. Ron LeBrun-KB4RON is up at 70' on the Rohn 45 tower putting the finishing touches on the updated installation. Great job, Ron!!

## MAJOR CONTESTS DURING APRIL

Contest/Special Event	Begin-End Times/Dates	Bands/Modes	QSO With	Exchange
Polish DX Contest	1500Z 06 Apr 1500Z 07 Apr	160 – 10 Meters SSB and CW	Anyone, Anywhere	RS(T), Serial
Spanish RTTY Contest	1600Z 06 Apr 1600Z 07 Apr	80 – 10 Meters RTTY Only	Anyone, Anywhere	RST, Serial
Japan International DX Contest	0700Z 13 Apr 1300Z 14 Apr	160 – 10 Meters CW Only	Japanese Stations	RST, CQ Zone (5, locally)
Yuri Gagarin DX Contest	2100Z 13 Apr 2100Z 14 Apr	160 – 10 Meters CW Only	Anyone, Anywhere	RST, ITU Zone (8, locally)
TARA Skirmish Digital/Prefix Contest	0000Z 20 Apr 2359Z 20 Apr	160 – 6 Meters All Digital Modes	Anyone, Anywhere	Name, Prefix to match call district
CQ Manchester Minerva DX Contest	1200Z 20 Apr 2359Z 21 Apr	80 – 10 Meters CW Only	Anyone, Anywhere	RST, Continent (NA, locally)
Serbian DX Contest	2100Z 20 Apr 1700Z 21 Apr	160 – 10 Meters CW Only	Anyone, Anywhere No Q's 0500Z - 0900Z	RST, ITU Zone (8, locally)
Polish DX RTTY Contest	1200Z 27 Apr 1200Z 28 Apr	80 – 10 Meters RTTY Only	Anyone, Anywhere	RST, Serial
Helvetia Contest	1300Z 27 Apr 1259Z 28 Apr	160 – 10 Meters SSB, CW & RTTY	Swiss Stations	RS(T), Serial

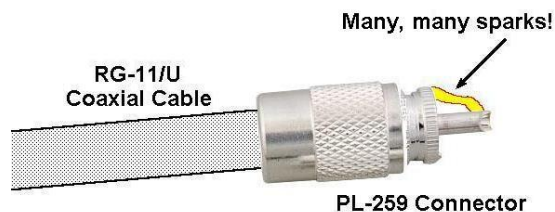
*Legend:* Serial = Sequential number of contact starting with 001; S/P/C = State, Province, DXCC Entity

From ARRL "Contest Corral" and WA7BNM Contest Calendar at <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/>

NOTE: State QSO Parties and "membership clubs" contests are not shown. See above references for information.

### Sparks, from page 1

across the gap between the connector's center pin and its outer shell. It wasn't even raining at that moment, but there was enough charge buildup via that dipole antenna for electrostatic discharge (ESD) activity to be going on and to make me very nervous.



I just left the cable totally along and let it spark to it heart's content until the thunderstorms had gone.

**Lessons Learned:** ESD events don't require direct hits from lightning.

Never design anything that's going to be connected to an antenna without providing an intentional discharge path as protection from electrostatic charge build-ups.

*Editor's comment:* My 70' tower gets hit about twice every summer. Coax cables are grounded at the top and bottom of the tower,

which reduces the lightning surge to the center conductor. DC blocking suppressors (Polyphaser and I.C.E.) do work well. Alpha Delta suppressors are not DC blockers and just depend on a gas tube to shunt the surge to ground. They are not recommended!!

Lightning suppressors on rotator control cables have not proven to be satisfactory!!

Most coax cable switches provide a grounding feature--use it providing the switch's body is grounded!!

Do not consider the ground pin in a 3-wire socket to be an effective ground as there is too much inductance in the wiring system. Install at least one, and preferably several, ground rods at the base of your antenna support and just outside your radio room and have all your equipment grounded to those outside rods.

When in doubt, disconnect all cables--at the point of entry if possible--when you hear thunder or see lightning above the horizon.

### -- TARC DX NET CALLS IT QUILTS --

The TARC DX Net shut down 25 March due to poor participation. DXers can subscribe (free) to the Ohio-Penn DX weekly updates via [opdx-request@barf80.org](mailto:opdx-request@barf80.org) and/or the weekly 425 DX News via <http://www.425dxn.org>. to access up to date DX news. Good luck with your DXing!



# April 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Breakfast @ Peach's, ± 7:15 AM 440 Net @ 7:30 PM, 444.100 Rptr	3 QCWA Lunch, @ Denny's 11:15 AM	4 TARC Net @ 7:30 PM, W4AC Repeater 146.805	5 Breakfast @ Peach's, ± 7:15 AM	6
7	8 DARN Emer- gency Net @ 11 AM Starts on NI4CE re- peater 145.430	9 Breakfast @ Peach's, ± 7:15 AM 440 Net @ 7:30 PM, 444.100 Rptr	10 <b>TARC Meet- ing @ 7 PM, Coast Guard Training Center</b>	11 TARC Net @ 7:30 PM, W4AC Repeater 146.805	12 Breakfast @ Peach's, ± 7:15 AM	13 <b>TARC VE Session @ 10:00 AM, Venice Library</b>
14	15	16 Breakfast @ Peach's, ± 7:15 AM 440 Net @ 7:30 PM, 444.100 Rptr	17	18 TARC Net @ 7:30 PM, W4AC Repeater 146.805	19 Breakfast @ Peach's, ± 7:15 AM	20
21	22	23 Breakfast @ Peach's, ± 7:15 AM 440 Net @ 7:30 PM, 444.100 Rptr	24	25 TARC Net @ 7:30 PM, W4AC Repeater 146.805	26 Breakfast @ Peach's, ± 7:15 AM	27
28	29	30 Breakfast @ Peach's, ± 7:15 AM 440 Net @ 7:30 PM, 444.100 Rptr				

NOTE: If the W4AC 146.805 Repeater is inoperative, nets scheduled for activity will be held on the W4AC 444.100 MHz Repeater. Thanks for your cooperation.

**TAMIAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Call Sign \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_ ARRL (Y/N)\_\_\_\_

Local Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Summer Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Application Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please check activity interests: Ass't Net Control \_\_, RFI/TVI \_\_, VE Testing \_\_, Training \_\_, Packet \_\_, RTTY \_\_,  
Computers \_\_, DXing \_\_, Contests \_\_, Field Day \_\_, Publicity \_\_, Emergency Communications \_\_, Special Events \_\_,  
VHF/UHF \_\_, SSTV \_\_, ATV \_\_, Repeater \_\_, EchoLink \_\_, Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Regular Member @ \$25.00/year \_\_, Family Membership @ \$30.00/year \_\_, Non-Voting Student Membership @ \$5.00/year \_\_ . (New Regular Members joining after 30 June pay \$15.00 for remainder of calendar year. \$25.00 dues payment after 31 October grants membership through remainder of year and all of the following year.)

MAIL TO: TARC, 1419 E. MANASOTA BEACH RD, ENGLEWOOD, FL 34223-6341

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Circulation: San Yoder-K3SY

2013 TARC Officers

President: Fred Lathwood-KJ4TNI  
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