



THE COMMUNICATOR



President's Message

Well, it's almost Spring and a young or old man's fancy turns to--radio; and, of course, "bacon". The reports I see show that a lot of club members went to Hamcation; some did very well, while others had fun; and a couple won some door prizes. Check out Karl's video on YouTube,,,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfRqc6m4I5Q>

Coming up is the Florida POTA contest; all of you who enjoy the parks; this is your chance. The rest of us can listen in and respond. Also please sign up for the annual BBQ&Q. This looks like a lot of fun and there will be POTA setups as well; or bring your own. Look forward to seeing you there.

Last meeting there was a great presentation about the Sarasota Military Academy. Like Pineview, they consider ham radio as an extracurricular activity. Hope we can assist in some way to continue these kinds of programs. It would be beneficial to see a YOTA com-

mittee expanding these youth activities as well as with other youth organizations. Since artificial intelligence (AI) is capturing the imaginations of young people today, this seems like a great opportunity for a special interest group using ham radio to spur creativity...let me know if you are interested.

I also read in the local papers about the Englewood club (EARS) working with some youths to launch a type of weather balloon that can be tracked. Last I heard it was located somewhere near Africa, Some of you reported tracking the balloon. This is another great YOTA activity at very low cost. We should explore that as well. Let me know your interest.

Finally, look for the new column in

KG4IYS



(Continued on page 2)

Inside This Issue

- Ham Club Online Tips 2
- TARC Email Contact List..... 2
- COMMITTEE REPORTS 3
- KariKatures by Karl et al. 4
- License Upgrade Incentive..... 6
- SARnet Sarasota Tower Status ... 6
- Digital Committee Announced ... 6
- HamCation 2026 in the Books 7
- Megalodon Race Event..... 9
- Pine View School Update..... 10
- Digital Corner (NEW) 12
- Florida State POTA Contest 13
- Pico Balloon Launch..... 14
- TARC Facebook Page 14

Upcoming Events

- ◆ [Megalodon Race Support](#)
[March 7 and 8, 2026](#)

- ◆ [Club Meeting 3/11/26](#)
["The Prodigal Sun"](#)
[Steve W4SNW](#)

- ◆ [5th Annual BBQ&Q](#)
[picnic at Oscar Shearer](#)
[March 22, 2026](#)

- ◆ [Club Meeting 4/8/26](#)
[TBD](#)
["Pine View School ARC " up-](#)
[date from the students!](#)

- ◆ [Shark's Tooth Festival](#)
[4/11-12/26. SES K4S](#)

Welcome New Members

02/17/26	Member	Rolf Erickson	Extra	KD0UBJ
02/13/26	First Year	Kevin Vaughn	Technician	KR4JNL
02/07/26	Member	George Becht	Extra	N2SQ
02/07/26	Member	Alice Becht	Technician	W1AMB
01/28/26	Member	Charles Lenoir	General	KQ4ALQ

TARC Has Elmers

Who or what is an “Elmer”? In “ham speak” an Elmer is any experienced amateur radio operator who helps a new or less experienced ham learn about the hobby in general or about specific radio related topics.

To help new hams get any help they may need, TARC has created the general email address:

“askelmer@tamiamiarc.org”. Currently, Steve NS4P receives these emails and either he can provide the help requested or he will find another club member who can.

TARC Contact Emails

Board of Directors

bod@tamiamiarc.org

Secretary

secretary@tamiamiarc.org

Treasurer

treasurer@tamiamiarc.org

Volunteer Examiner Team

VE-team@tamiamiarc.org

Ask Elmer ham assistance

askelmer@tamiamiarc.org

The Communicator submissions

communicator@tamiamiarc.org

Quartermaster (equipment mgr)

quartermaster@tamiamiarc.org

Librarian (ham book library)

librarian@tamiamiarc.org

Membership Coordinator

membership@tamiamiarc.org

Ham Club Online HELP

hcolhelp@tamiamiarc.org

Webmaster—report a problem

websupport@tamiamiarc.org

Tips for Using Ham Club Online (HCOL)

Tamiami Amateur Radio Club (TARC) dues payments have moved off the TARC website and can now be paid online via Ham Club On Line (HCOL). To make dues payments on HCOL use **Option #1** or **Option #2**

Option #1

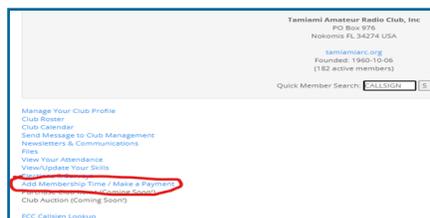
Step 1. Log into your HCOL Account



Step 2. Select “TARC” if you belong to more than one Club in HCOL

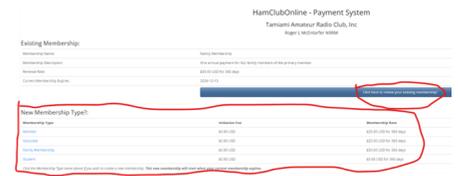


Step 3. Select Add Membership Time / Make Payment

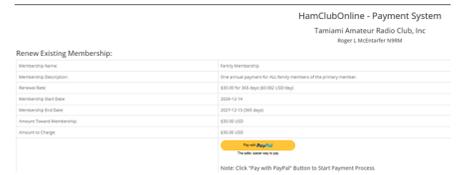


Step 4. Select Click here to renew your existing membership!

If you are changing your membership type from a Regular Membership to Family Membership or visa versa select the new membership type.



Step 5. Select Pay with PayPal



Option #2

Step 1. Visit

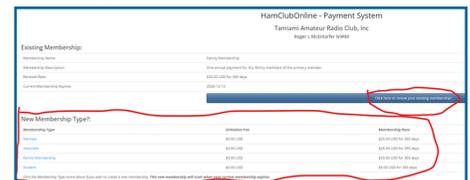
<https://www.hamclubonline.com/>

Click Pay My Club Dues and

Type in your Call Sign; click submit.



Step 2. Select Tamiami Amateur Radio Club if you have more than one club in HCOL



Step 3. Select Click here to renew your existing membership! If you are changing your membership type from a Regular Membership to Family Membership or visa versa select the new membership type.

(Continued on page 11)

President's Message (Cont'd)

this **Communicator** covering the newly formed Digital Group; they currently plan to write up items of interest in the digital world, and the

new evolving activities.

73 y'all ... OM de KG4IYS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Sunshine

Shaun KQ4YAX

- We have mailed a Get Well Card to Captain Bob (W5GJ) from the TARC club.
- We have also mailed a club Get Well Card to Steve Morton (AA4TI) who is experiencing health issues.

VE Testing

Steve NS4P

Last Test Date: 02/11/26

Number tested: 6

Passed: 6

New Members: 1

Member Upgrades: 0

Next Test Date: 03/07/26

NOTE: A special VE-Test session was held at Pine View School on 02/20/2026:

- Number tested: 6
- Upgrade to Amateur Extra: 1
- New Technician: 3

QCWA Liaison

AI KOAL

Chapter 53 of the Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA) meets for lunch at 11AM on the first Monday of each month at Denny's on Bee Ridge in Sarasota. You do not need to be a member of QCWA to attend and your "Plus 1" is welcome. There is an interesting program along with an excellent meal and fellowship. For more information on QCWA see the Chapter website – <https://qcwa53.org>

(no meetings Jun—Sep)

Membership

Roger N9RM

As of: 02/26/26

Total Membership:..... 182

163 Regular Members

1 Associate Member

1 First Year Members

17 Life Members

<https://www.hamclubonline.com/>

REVIEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP RECORD FOR ACCURACY. SEND CHANGES TO:

membership@tamiamiarc.org

Public Information Officer

Karl K4RLX

I had an opportunity to interview John - N3PQD about the up and coming Shark Tooth 10k / 5K Races. Take a look at the video and contact John to volunteer to be an operator during the race. **WE NEED VOLUNTEERS**, there are several slots left.

<https://youtu.be/aNH3OehkYcg>

Repeater / Technical

Frank W2XYZ

<https://tamiamiarc.org/tarc-repeaters/>

A tower climber completed a complete inspection of the 2 Meter repeater antenna and feedline. One connector was replaced. It appears that this work did not correct the feedback problem. Additional testing will be conducted in the near future in an effort to resolve the issue.

Remote Station

Tom W8QJF

<https://tamiamiarc.org/club-remote-hf-station>

Several club members are regular users of the HF station and they give it great signal reports sent and received. If you are antenna or cost constrained from trying HF comms, this is for you!

Net Manager

Paul KN4BAR

Thanks to our regular 2 meter net controllers Tony W4RFV, and Steve KN4NFX for keeping a great rotating schedule. I'm sure Frank W2XYZ and Steve NS4P would like to have an occasional guest net control to relieve them on the Tuesday DMR and Wednesday 10 meter nets.

Florida State POTA Contest

Jim N7JIM

<https://fspota.org>

The TARC sponsored POTA event will be April 17-20. The event rules are complete and posted on the web site. A TARC POTA "club" activation will take place on Friday, 4/17/26 at Myakka River State Park and again on Saturday, 4/18/26 at Oscar Sherer State Park from 8 am to 5 pm each day. Sign up with Jim N7JIM or Paul KN4BAR.

KariKatures by Karl (and others)!



See Anyone You Know?

Tens of billions of \$ for infrastructure and millions of kWh of electricity for Artificial Intelligence. What better use for such technology than this!



2026 License Upgrade Incentive Announced

At our February board of directors meeting, the board approved of repeating this popular club incentive for members to upgrade their licenses. We currently have 22 Technician Class, 62 General Class, and 5 Advanced Class licensed club members that we would really like to see get upgraded. There's something for everybody!

<https://tamiamiarc.org/license-upgrade-incentive-program/>

The incentives are:

- **TARC pays for your examination fee. Pass or fail, we will pay the fee.**
- **2027 dues paid by the club**
- **\$50 DX-Engineering gift card**

No excuses, no cost, it's a no brainer. Get yourself upgraded this year!

73, de your board of directors



All your club buddies are here to help you study and get ready. Attend a breakfast or two to get your questions answered:

- Tuesday 6 to 8 am [at Peach's](#)
- Friday 9 to 10 am [at Perkins](#)

W4AC POTA Activation

1pm Sunday	Oscar Sherer State Park
March 22, 2026	1843 S. Tamiami Trl.
www.tamiamiarc.org	Osprey, FL

REGISTER AND PAY ONLINE AT THE TARC WEBSITE STORE

[<CLICK HERE>](#)

Or at any club meeting or function in person by cash, check, or credit card

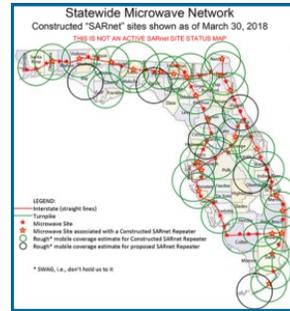
TARC is an ARRL affiliated club. Are you an ARRL member? We are.

Sarasota SARNET Tower Coming Back Soon!

I attended the Statewide Amateur Radio Network ([SARNET](#)) forum presentation at HamCation in Orlando on 2/14/26. I have always had an interest in emergency communications (EmComm) since first getting my license in 2017. Back then I could hit the Sarasota SARNET repeater at I-75 and University using an HT and a simple J-Pole external antenna.

Moderators Randy Pierce AG4UU and Joe Poerschke WB4HIS reported great progress has been made over the past six months to take SARNET to the next level. Their discussion centered on the capabilities of the system and upcoming plans for 2026.

So, what is SARNET? It is a linked network of 38 now, and soon to be 45, amateur radio 70cm repeaters located through out the state and all linked by either fiber



optic cable or microwave relay. When you key up on one repeater you are also keying up all of the other repeaters in the state! Imagine; using your HT to talk with someone in Jacksonville.

The Sarasota tower was taken down when the diverging diamond was created at University and I-75. Randy reported that a new tower has been erected and is awaiting electrical power. They have all the hardware ready to go to bring the old 444.800 MHz, 100 Hz PL SARNET repeater back online in Sarasota in the very near future.

73, de Paul KN4BAR

Signal Boost: Meet Your New Digital Committee!

Amateur radio has always been about pushing boundaries—from the first spark-gap transmissions to bouncing signals off the moon. Today, that frontier is increasingly defined by ones and zeros. To ensure our club stays at the leading edge of the hobby, we are thrilled to announce the formation of the Digital Committee.

While CW and SSB will always be the soul of the shack, the world of digital modes offers incredible opportunities to pull signals out of the noise, link repeaters globally, and experiment with high-efficiency data. Whether you're a seasoned "digi-head" or just curious about what that warbling sound on 20 meters is, this committee is here for you.

What's on the Workbench?

The Digital Committee is tasked with being the club's technical brain trust for all things non-analog. Our goals include:

- **Education:** Hosting workshops on software setup (WSJT-X, fldi-

gi, etc.).

- **Infrastructure:** Maintaining and optimizing our local DMR and D-STAR repeaters.
- **Innovation:** Exploring emerging tech like FreeDV (digital voice) and M17.
- **Support:** Helping members troubleshoot soundcard interfaces and rig control.

We Want You! (Yes, You with the Raspberry Pi)

A committee is only as strong as its members, and we are currently looking for volunteers to join the team. You don't need to be a computer scientist, but a passion for digital experimentation is a must.

We are specifically looking for "Subject Matter Experts" in:

- **Weak Signal Modes:** FT8, FT4, and JS8Call.
- **Networked Audio:** DMR, D-STAR, and System Fusion (YSF).
- **Digital Voice & HF Data:** FreeDV,

Winlink, and Packet.

- **Hardware:** Hotspots, MMDVM nodes, and SDR integration.

If you enjoy helping others get their "waterfall" working or have ideas on how to modernize our club station, we'd love to have your input.

Join the Bit-Stream

Ready to help us bridge the gap between the computer and the radio? Whether you want to lead a project or just offer occasional technical advice, there's a seat at the digital table for you.

How to join: Come chat with us at the next monthly meeting, sign up at:

<https://tamiamiarc.org/digital-committee-interest-form/>,

or drop an email to the club secretary with the subject line "Digital Committee Volunteer."

Let's see what we can decode together!

73, de TARC Board of Directors

HamCation 2026 is in the Books

If you've been around certain club members lately, you might have noticed them smiling more than usual. There are probably about 3 dozen area Hams with a big smile. Why the smile? Because they returned happy from HamCation. We had 28 people take our chartered bus to HamCation. Several other club members traveled on their own to that destination for various reasons. Every year since 2019 our club has arranged a HamCation bus trip for members and area Hams. Well not exactly every year because due to COVID, there was no HamCation in 2021. An online version of HamCation was held in its place that year.

Our bus trip began on Saturday, February 14 at 6:15 AM. Our luxury charter bus picked us up at the north parking lot near Sharkey's. From there we went to the Sarasota Red Cross building where we picked up three more club members. It was a bit foggy that morning, but Andrew, our driver, had no problem getting us safely and promptly to the gates of HamCation. Every year, Steve, NS4P, volunteers to work at HamCation. As usual, he met our bus on its arrival and we had royal treatment bringing us to the ticket booth and having the bus parked conveniently nearby.

Let the shopping begin! For those that never attended HamCation, a brief description would be, two buildings filled with vendors of new equipment and every accessory imaginable. A third building is a mixture of sellers of new and used items. There is also about a trillion fleamarketeers outside ready to haggle prices (their wives told them, you better not bring that back home—ha,ha). In the center of the activity is a food court with enough varieties

to satisfy anyone's hunger. Every day, and all day long, several forums

If anyone ran out of spending money early, or was in need of rest before



are held simultaneously on a wide range of radio related topics. FCC License Exams are also held for anyone wishing to get licensed or to upgrade their current license. The weather this year was beautiful, but for those that don't want to walk in the sunshine and enjoy the mild temperatures, golf carts traverse the area to transport weary shoppers to their next location. For those that prefer their own transportation, electric mobility scooters can be rented for the day. In addition to all the above, hourly drawings are held by the event sponsor. About 200 prizes are given away on hourly drawings plus a grand prize of a Yaesu FT-1 Optima. The prizes this year totaled over \$25,000.00 Some vendors also offer free raffles of their equipment. You would think with approximately 20,000 attendees to HamCation, that our group would have about a zero chance of winning something. That's not what happened. Hop AC8NS and John N3PQD both won significant prizes. Personally, I think their luck must come from the bright green shirts we proudly wear.

hitting the swaps again, the bus was open for purposes of resting or dropping off boat anchors, et cetera, from noon until our departure at 4 PM. Our ride home was rather uneventful and relatively quiet (except for the snoring). The sun was setting when we got back to Venice. The end of a perfect day.

73, de Frank W2XYZ.



Editor's Note: Our new PIO has outdone himself with promotions for the club's participation in HamCation. The caricature above is captivating! And, he has posted several videos and many pictures of club members at, to, and from HamCation on the club's Facebook page. Please check it out and don't forget to "like" and "subscribe" to our club page!

[<LINK>](#)

Winter Field Day, by the Numbers, by Jack W1JJR

Winter Field Day 2026



Rating	Point Value
Phone *	1
Digital *	2
CW *	2
Multiplier *	18

Mode	Count of MODE	Score
CW	481	962
PSK	26	52
SSB	930	930
Grand Total	1437	1944
	Multiplier	34992

Count of CONT	COUNTRY	Total
AS	India	1
	Republic of Korea	1
AS Total		2
EU	Federal Republic of Germany	1
	France	1
	Spain	1
EU Total		3
NA	Asiatic Russia	1
	Bahamas	2
	Canada	38
	Mexico	1
	Sint Maarten	1
	USA	1385
NA Total		1428
OC	Hawaii	2
OC Total		2
SA	Ecuador	2
SA Total		2
Grand Total		1437

Count of BAND	Column Labels	1/24/2026	1/25/2026	Grand Total
10M		23	24	47
15M		178	220	398
20M		364	547	911
2M		1	11	12
40M		19	42	61
70CM			8	8
Grand Total		585	852	1437

Row Labels	Count of COUNTRY
Asiatic Russia	1
Bahamas	2
Canada	38
Ecuador	2
Federal Republic of Germany	1
France	1
Hawaii	2
India	1
Mexico	1
Republic of Korea	1
Sint Maarten	1
Spain	1
USA	1385
Grand Total	1437

Row Labels	Count of CONT
AS	2
EU	3
NA	1428
OC	2
SA	2
Grand Total	1437

STATE	Count of STATE	Distinct Count of STATE
AL	61	1
AR	23	1
AZ	12	1
CA	13	1
CO	19	1
CT	20	1
DE	5	1
FL	43	1
GA	83	1
IA	8	1
ID	4	1
IL	36	1
IN	59	1
KS	10	1
KY	29	1
LA	16	1
MA	25	1
MD	24	1
ME	8	1
MI	42	1
MN	26	1
MO	30	1
MS	9	1
MT	3	1
NC	73	1
ND	3	1
NE	4	1
NH	9	1
NJ	43	1
NM	3	1
NV	5	1
NY	48	1
OH	112	1
OK	20	1
OR	5	1
PA	75	1
RI	5	1
SC	55	1
SD	1	1
TN	69	1
TX	134	1
UT	6	1
VA	60	1
VT	5	1
WA	9	1
WI	20	1
WV	11	1
WY	2	1
Grand Total	1385	48

SHACK OF THE MONTH (or not?)

It's hard to fathom. Almost 200 club members and nary a ham in sight who wants to showcase their shack.



It's Just Unbelievable

Shark's Tooth Megalodon Race Course Monitoring



Saturday, March 7, 2026
10k Race from 6 am to 10 am

Sunday, March 8, 2026
5k Race from 6 am to 10 am

**We need YOU to help as a
course monitor along the
route**



CONTACT: johzener@att.net / PHONE: 203-650-2844

TARC has support this Venice area event for many years with licensed ham radio operators stationed along the race course to monitor and report runner progress or medical emergencies that may occur. We use the TARC 2m DMR repeater with HT radios for each course monitor. If you don't have a radio, we can provide you with one.

We usually get a good turn out of volunteers but for the 2026 event we are coming up short! At press time we still need about 6 more volunteers along the course.

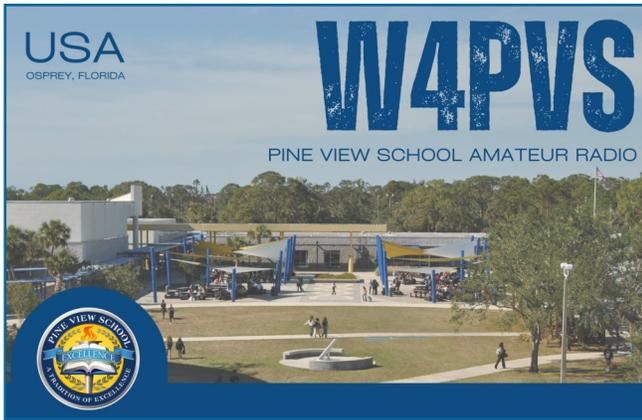
Only a Technician Class license is needed. **We need you!**



Pictures From The 2024 TARC Participation

73, de John N3PQD

Pine View School (PVS) Update



TARC VE-Team on February 20th with 2 new student club member Technicians and the first PVS ham radio club's **Amateur Extra, Diya Panthulu.**

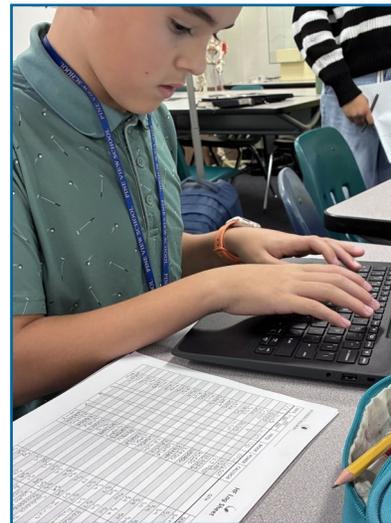
Over the past month, the members of Pine View Ham Radio Club have been keeping themselves busy! Using grant-funded kits provided by Mrs. Rosander, students have been building mini transceiver radios and learning new things every meeting.

From February 9th to February 13th, Pine View participated in the semiannual ARRL School Club Roundup Contest. Students stopped by during their free time to operate the radio, making calls and securing contacts with people from all over the United States, and some other countries too! Along the way, they gained experience making and logging calls, sending postcards, and practicing proper HAM Radio etiquette. With well over 100 contacts, the club hopes to improve its score from 6th place (from October's School Club Round Up) to something much higher this time around!

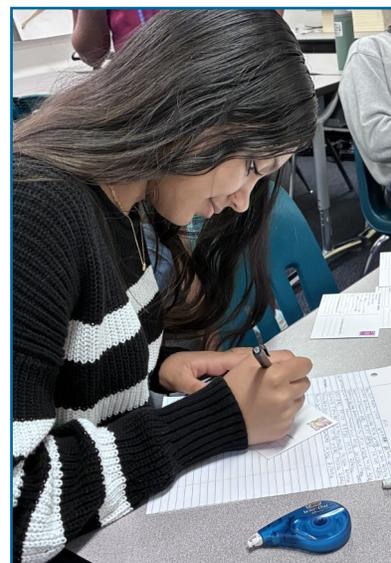
The TARC VE-Team (Roger N9RM, Paul KN4BAR, Jim N7JIM, Al K0AL, and Dave KZ4UU) visited Pine View once again on February 20th, 2026, allowing the school to host another exam session for students aspiring to obtain or upgrade their licenses. six candidates tested: three earned their Technician licenses, and one earned an Amateur Extra license. Congratulations to all new licensees! With an amateur extra operator, the school now has full access to all FCC-allocated amateur bands and modes, including exclusive segments unavailable to lower licensees.

With lots more coming up, we're excited to see where our club goes next! Thank you TARC for your support, and see you next month!

73, de Diya KZ4ZT

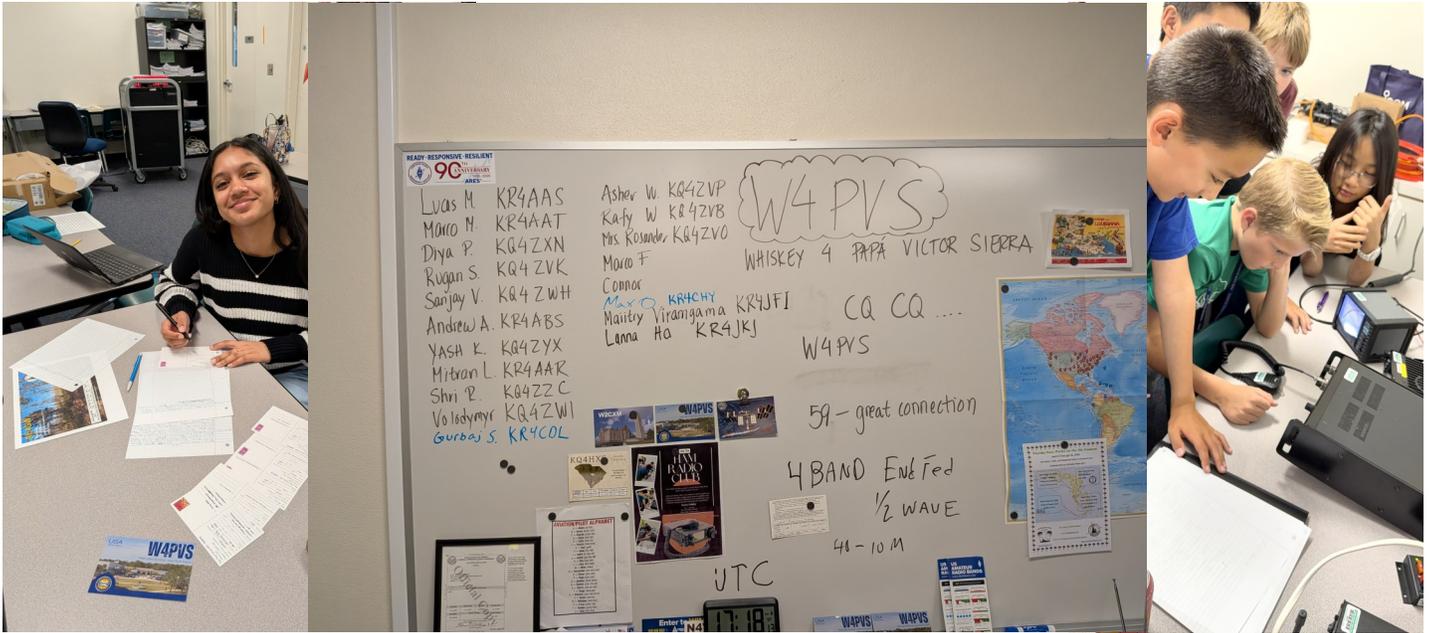


The amateur radio club members and newly licensed amateur radio operators are not only having fun making contacts on the radio but they are also learning good radio practices of logging contacts and sending and receiving QSL cards. The students are off to a great start in this wonderful hobby.



Editor's Note: I would like to welcome Pine View School student Diya Panthulu *KZ4ZT* as a new contributor to our club newsletter team!

Pine View School (PVS) Update (Cont'd)



**ARRL School Club Roundup
February 2026
17,818 Points!**

- 17 Schools Contacted
- 1 DX Contact (Mexico)
- 1 Province Contact (Ontario)
- 31 States Contacted
- 151 Total Contacts

HCOL Tips (Cont'd)

HamClubOnline - Payment System
Tamiami Amateur Radio Club, Inc
Roger L. McEntarfer N9RM

Existing Membership:

Membership Name:	Family Membership
Membership Description:	One annual payment for ALL family members of the primary member.
Renewal Rate:	\$30.00 USD for 365 days
Current Membership Expires:	2026-12-13

[Click here to renew your existing membership.](#)

New Membership Type?:

Membership Type	Initiation Fee	Membership Rate
Member	\$5.00 USD	\$25.00 USD for 365 days
Associate	\$5.00 USD	\$25.00 USD for 365 days
Family Membership	\$5.00 USD	\$30.00 USD for 365 days
Student	\$5.00 USD	\$5.00 USD for 365 days

Click on Membership Type name above. You will be taken to a new membership. This new membership will cost when your current membership expires.

Step 5. Select Pay with PayPal

HamClubOnline - Payment System
Tamiami Amateur Radio Club, Inc
Roger L. McEntarfer N9RM

Renew Existing Membership:

Membership Name:	Family Membership
Membership Description:	One annual payment for ALL family members of the primary member.
Renewal Rate:	\$30.00 for 365 days (\$0.082 USD/day)
Membership Start Date:	2026-12-14
Membership End Date:	2027-12-13 (365 days)
Amount Toward Membership:	\$30.00 USD
Amount to Charge:	\$30.00 USD

Pay with PayPal
The safer, easier way to pay.

Note: Click "Pay with PayPal" Button to Start Payment Process

Step 4. Click Submit

HamClubOnline - Payment System
Tamiami Amateur Radio Club, Inc
Roger L. McEntarfer N9RM

Renew Existing Membership:

Membership Name:	Family Membership
Membership Description:	One annual payment for ALL family members of the primary member.
Renewal Rate:	\$30.00 USD for 365 days
Membership Start Date:	2026-12-14
Temporary Membership End Date:	2027-12-13
Amount to Pay Toward Membership:	<input type="text" value="\$30.00 USD (\$30.00 USD minimum)"/>
Optional Additional Donation:	<input type="text" value="\$0.00 USD"/>
Payment Method:	PayPal Payments

Note: All credit card information is securely stored and processed by PayPal Payments or Square Payments. HamClubOnline and it's users are unable to view your credit card and other protected payment information.

Members are reminded by email about 30 days before their annual dues are due.

Of course members can always choose to pay by cash, check or credit card at any club meeting. Dues payments can also be mailed to TARC, PO Box 976, Nokomis, FL 34274. You can always submit questions or comments by email to:

hcolhelp@tamiamiarc.org
membership@tamiamiarc.org

73, de Roger N9RM

TARC Digital Corner

"25 or 6 to 4?": The High Stakes of Precision Timing

Whether you're a musician staring at a clock at 3:35 AM (the "25 or 6 to 4" before 4:00 AM) or an engineer managing a high-speed network, time is the invisible thread that holds our digital world together. In this edition of the **TARC Digital Corner**, we're diving into why "close enough" isn't good enough when it comes to time resources.

The Digital Handshake: Why Every Second Counts

Most modern digital modes — specifically the **WSJT-X suite (FT8, FT4, JT65)** — operate on fixed-length time slots. In FT8, for example, sequences are exactly 15 seconds long.

Windows is notoriously poor at maintaining high-precision time on its own. For digital mode operators, the standard "Windows Time" sync often happens too infrequently, allowing the clock to drift significantly between updates.

Your station and the remote station must start and stop transmitting at nearly the exact same moment. PC system clocks are governed by cheap quartz crystals that are sensitive to temperature. As your shack warms up or your CPU works hard to decode 50 signals at once, and the "pulse" of your computer actually changes speed.

If your computer clock is off by more than **1.5 to 2 seconds**, your software will be listening when it should be talking, or decoding a signal that has already ended.

The Result: You see the "traces" on the waterfall, but the software fails to decode the message. You're effectively shouting into the void while everyone else is perfectly in sync.

Here is how to get peak time Performance

To get your station running with the precision of a Swiss watch (or a Chicago brass section), **NetTime** is the gold standard for Windows-based digital operators. It's lightweight, free, and significantly more aggressive than the

default Windows Time service. (Tip: If you're in the field without internet or GPS, you can manually sync your clock by listening to the **WWV** time pips on 5, 10, or 15 MHz and hitting "Apply" on your clock settings at the start of a new minute. It's "old school," but it works!).

Another popular time app for the shack: time.is. Check it out.

• Step 1: Download and Install

Download the latest stable version of NetTime from timesync-tool.com.

During installation, choose to **"Install as a Service."** This ensures that the clock starts syncing the moment you boot up, even before you log in.

• Step 2: Optimal Configuration for Ham Radio

Once installed, right-click the NetTime icon in your system tray and select **Settings**. Use the following parameters to ensure you never drift out of your

15-second window:

- ◇ **Time Servers:** By default, it uses pool.ntp.org. This is usually fine, but you can add specific "Stratum 1" servers if you want extreme accuracy.
- ◇ **Update Interval:** Change this to **15 Minutes** (or even 5 minutes if your computer clock is prone to drifting).
- ◇ **Retry Interval:** Set this to **1 Minute**. If a sync fails due to a brief internet hiccup, it will try again immediately.
- ◇ **Max Free Run Time:** Set this to **4 Hours**. This warns you if the program hasn't been able to sync for a while.

• Step 3: Monitoring Your Sync

The most important part of the NetTime interface is the **"Offset"** reading.

Green Icon: You are synced within a few milliseconds.

(Continued on page 13)



TARC Digital Corner (Cont'd)

(Continued from page 12)

Yellow/Red Icon: Your clock has drifted. In WSJT-X, this will manifest as a high DT (Delta Time) value in the decode window.

Check Your DT

If you aren't seeing decodes but you are seeing signals, check your DT first:

- ◇ Perfect Sync: DT between **-0.1 and +0.1**.
- ◇ Acceptable: DT up to **+1.0**.

- ◇ **Danger Zone:** If you see DTs climbing toward **1.5 or 2.0**, your time is becoming too late to decode

Like the classic Chicago track implies, searching for clarity in the early hours is tough. Don't let your systems be "searching for the break of day" because of a drifted clock. High-quality time resources are the pulse of a healthy digital environment. Keep your clock tight, your DT low, and your decodes high!

73's DE TARC Digital Committee

TARC to Compete in the Florida State POTA Contest!

All club members are urged to compete as individuals in this annual, statewide Parks on the Air (POTA) contest. Not only Florida; but, Georgia, Alabama, and Texas will be conducting their respective statewide contests during the weekend of April 18-20, 2026. The contest(s) are normally held the first weekend in April each year but in 2026 this was an Easter Sunday weekend.

Contest details and rules can be found at the fspota.org website. TARC took over the sponsorship of this event in 2025 and this will be our first year of managing it. One of the competing "Classes" for the event is "Club Station" and TARC is sponsoring a W4AC Club Station entry to the contest.

Our Florida state POTA contest is unique in that we will allow operations from Friday, 4/17 through Monday 4/20 from 8 am to 8 pm local time each day. We will host a club W4AC operation on Friday 4/17 and again on Saturday 4/18. The club will bring no radio equipment to each of these events. Instead, we are asking club members to bring their POTA stations out to the designated park between 8 am and 8 pm to operate as a W4AC **Club Station**.

Each participant will be asked to keep a separate log for the activation showing the STATION_CALLSIGN as W4AC and the OPERATOR as yourself. In this way you will get personal credit on the pota.app for the activation and QSOs as an individual. When all of the site logs are later combined by the TARC Site Host, TARC will get credit in the state contest for all of your hard work too as the W4AC STATION.

Let the Site Host know as soon as

Operate as W4AC for as long or as little as you like. When finished operating as W4AC, you are free to remain in the park and continue operating (new logbook please!) as yourself, or you may choose to go to another park and operate from there.

It is critical that you submit your W4AC log to the Site Host as soon as possible after the event so that he may consolidate all of the W4AC QSOs from that location for our Club Station contest entry.

Operating Sites Are:

- **Friday, April 17, 2026**
Myakka River State Park, US-1905
Site Host: Jim N7JIM
- **Saturday, April 18, 2026**
Oscar Sherer State Park, US-1909
Site Host: Paul KN4BAR
- **OTHER?** If you have a suggestion contact Jim N7JIM with the location, date, and times.

Please send any questions or comments to admin@fspota.org.

73, Jim N7JIM FSPOTA Committee Chairman



possible that you plan to participate, what band(s) and modes you would like to operate on, and what time period you plan to be at the park. Check in with the Site Host at the park on the event date to coordinate your assigned operating location and to obtain any required band pass filters.

EARS is First To the Stratosphere!

Bob KN4RKE sent me an email this month showcasing an Englewood Amateur Radio Society (EARS) successful launch of a PICO balloon with a position reporting package on Friday, February 19, 2026. EARS had partnered with the STEM program at SKY Academy in Englewood to assist middle schoolers with this project. The project cost EARS about \$200 and their balloon (N4EAR-1) can be tracked on amateur.sondehub.org.



national Space Station in January of 2025. The STEM teacher their and TARC member Marie KQ4ZSS is planning to do a similar PICO balloon launch this Fall with her students. She has been accepted into the ballooning workshop given by ARRL in July.

As most of our TARC members know, we are working with middle schoolers at Pine View School in Osprey after helping to facilitate a successful ARISS contact with the Inter-

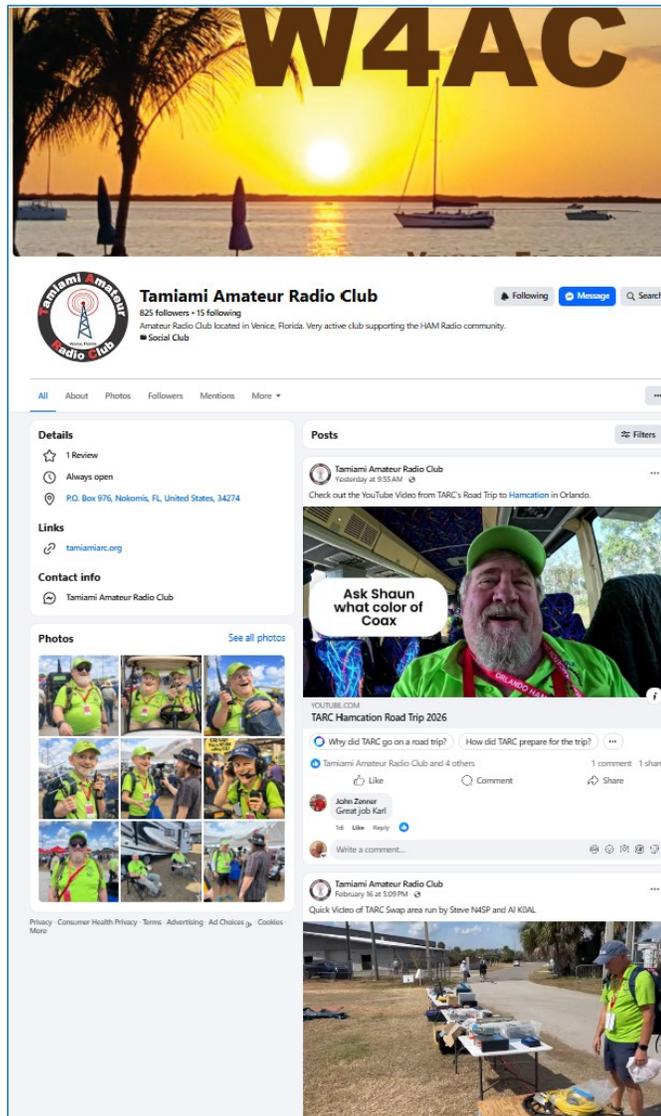
de Paul KN4BAR

de Paul KN4BAR

New PIO Brings New Life to TARC Facebook Page

Being part of an amateur radio club is about community, and Facebook is a great way to strengthen that connection both on and off the air. It gives operators an easy place to share club updates, event photos, meeting reminders, and emergency communications information in real time. It also helps promote activities like field days, POTA activations, and local service projects to a wider audience. Beyond radio, Facebook keeps hams connected with family and friends, especially those who may not be on the air, so they can share achievements, station upgrades, and memorable contacts. Staying active online helps grow the hobby, support the club, and keep personal connections strong.

As the new Public Information Officer (PIO), it's my responsibility to promote our club and the amateur radio hobby to the community and help share the great things we're doing. But the real success of that effort depends on our members, your participation, enthusiasm, and



willingness to represent the club are what truly make our story worth telling.

To help promote our club to the community we serve, I'll be reaching out to traditional media outlets while also placing a stronger emphasis on social media platforms like Facebook and YouTube. To reach a wider audience, I'm asking each of you to share our Facebook event posts on your personal pages. Your support and engagement will help us expand our reach and showcase the great work our club is doing.

73, de Karl K4RLX

Editors Note:

Please visit the club's Facebook page. Register your "like" and start "following" our page to help boost the Facebook rating for our club page.

<LINK>

Tamiami Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

The Tamiami Amateur Radio club was organized in 1960 to serve Venice and the surrounding area with emergency communications. The founders of our club realized that it is of paramount importance to organize the amateur radio operators in the area, to promote training and provide community service. We have a proud history.

Following Hurricane Donna of 1960, a number of the radio amateurs in the Venice area decided to unite into a formal club. At 7:30 PM on 06 October 1960, twenty interested parties met at the Sunshine Kitchen, and E. B. Roberts was elected as temporary chairman. During the two-hour gathering, a committee consisting of Joe Barone, P. D. Baird and Martin Sharp was appointed to study and draw up bylaws for the organization.

In January 1985 the TARC was incorporated under the laws of Florida as a not-for-profit corporation and, in 2001, as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with the IRS.



CLUB REPEATERS

DMR Repeater - 444.100 MHz (+) Color Code 1 — Use TS-1 for TARC Private Talk Group (TG) 310442. and local TG 2 and 9. Use TS-2 for ALL other possible Brandmeister TGs available dynamically on TS-2.

Analog 2m Repeater - 146.805 MHz (-) PL 100Hz — EchoLink W4AC-R (Node # 513309)

ALL TARC Repeaters bear the FCC Callsign of W4AC . Repeater trustee is Randy KQ4PIV. Location: 565 Paul Morris Dr., Englewood, FL

<[FULL REPEATER INFORMATION HERE](#)>

WEEKLY RADIO NET SCHEDULE

MONDAYS, 1:30 pm (HF net)
7251 KHz LSB

TUESDAYS, 7:30 pm (DMR net)
444.100 MHz, color code 1, TS 1, Talk Group 310442

WEDNESDAYS, 7:30 pm (HF net)
28.460 MHz USB

THURSDAYS, 7:30 pm (FM net)
146.805 MHz PL 100 Hz (-)
ECHO LINK: 513309 (W4AC-R)

Net Manager, Paul KN4BAR

<[FULL NET SCHEDULE](#)>

THE COMMUNICATOR is a publication of the Tamiami Amateur Radio Club (TARC). It is published monthly; except during the summer months when the July and August issues are combined. The Communicator is forwarded to all members via e-mail, and is available for viewing on the club’s web site - www.tamiamiarc.org.

Co-Editors— Paul KN4BAR and Nancy N4ZM who acknowledge and thank contributing writers and photographers.

2026 TARC Officers:

- President**
Chester ‘Chet’ Fennell KG4IYS
- Vice President**
Frank Wroblewski W2XYZ
- Secretary**
Lou Ronnau KC4LR
secretary@tamiamiarc.org
- Treasure**
Dwight Sullivan KT4DS
treasurer@tamiamiarc.org

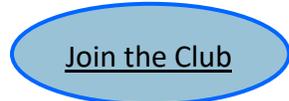
2026 TARC Directors:

- Steve Phillips NS4P
- Roger McEntarfer N9RM
- Allan ‘Al’ Culbert K0AL
- James ‘Jim’ Miller N7JIM
- Paul Nienaber KN4BAR

CONTACT BOARD OF DIRECTORS BY EMAIL:
bod@tamiamiarc.org

Annual Club Dues are due each year on the anniversary date of your last dues payment. The club’s membership system sends automatic renewal notices by email 30 days in advance of a due date.

- Regular member:** \$25.00/year **Family membership:** \$30.00/year
- Non-voting student:** \$5.00/year.
- New licensee:** Tested by TARC VE– gets a free first year of club membership.



TARC Website: www.tamiamiarc.org **Contact:** webmaster@tamiamiarc.org
General Info Contact the club secretary: secretary@tamiamiarc.org

