



THE COMMUNICATOR



Mailing Address: P. O. Box 976, Nokomis, FL 34274

W4AC Repeaters: 444.100 MHz (DMR) & 146.805 MHz (-) (PL100Analog)

Incorporated 1984

<http://www.tamiamiarc.org>

July/August, 2020

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President's message...KJ4NDO

AS I think about our club and how the individual members got interested in ham radio, I'm reminded of the times in my life when I first came in contact with ham radio.



I remember when I was in 5th or 6th grade a friend of mine and I pulled an old radio apart in my basement so he could get parts for a set he was building. I first heard Morse code on that set after he built it. Later in high school, my brother traded some stuff for a homemade AM station and a National HRO-50 T-1 receiver with three frequency trays. We asked around and found a ham who fired up the AM station. He used a 100 watt light bulb as an antenna to show us that the station could transmit. He said that the station transmitted a very dirty signal. My Dad said to throw the transmitter out and we did.

I went to college at St. Dunstan's University on Prince Edward Island, Canada. I had a 7 transistor Emerson AM/FM portable radio that suffered from poor reception. The science professor, a Canadian ham, I think, taught me how a 10 foot thin copper wire attached to the radio's antenna port could improve reception. It was the first time I ever received WWVA, Wheeling, WV. At night we heard stations all over Canada and the US, stations I had never heard of.

My next contact with ham radio was in 1969 in Vietnam. I was an Air Cavalry scout pilot. I was passing through the orderly room and heard the First Sergeant talking about calling his wife via ham radio. I asked him how to use that system. I'd been married about two years then and thought it a great idea to call home and talk with my wife. The First Sergeant told me what to do. I then met a lot of great hams, guys who dedicated their time to connect troops via short wave radio with their families at home. My wife learned to say "over," when she was finished talking.

Later in life I worked for Glock, Inc. in Smyrna, GA. During the 9-11 disaster, many city of New York telephones were not working. I coordinated a shipment of pistols to one of our customers in New York City, via a ham providing emergency telephone service from White Plains, NY. He was a well-spoken guy, professional, confident in his systems. The shipment of pistols arrived on time.

After I retired I thought ham radio might be stimulating and fun. I remembered all of the radio people I had met; they were ladies and gentlemen. They were calm, problem solvers, determined, in a polite way, to make contacts. And they all exhibited a little swagger, a smiling enthusiasm for challenge, for problem solving, for talking to folks on the other side of the globe. They had a thirst for that Ah Ha moment when the static clears and a disembodied voice says, "I have you loud and clear." Hams don't quit easily. They are like the sea roses that grow wild and thrive on the margins of salt laced dirt roads next to the Atlantic Ocean in New England. Hams are resilient. They are there when you need them.

I wanted to summarize what it was that makes hams different in the face of a pandemic or some other crises. Here's what I think: Hams are people who come what may, keep calm and carry on. Have a safe summer.

73s to all, Jim, KJ4NDO

Next scheduled meeting September 09, 2020

Our meeting will start at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, 09 September, 2020 with the format/location to be determined.

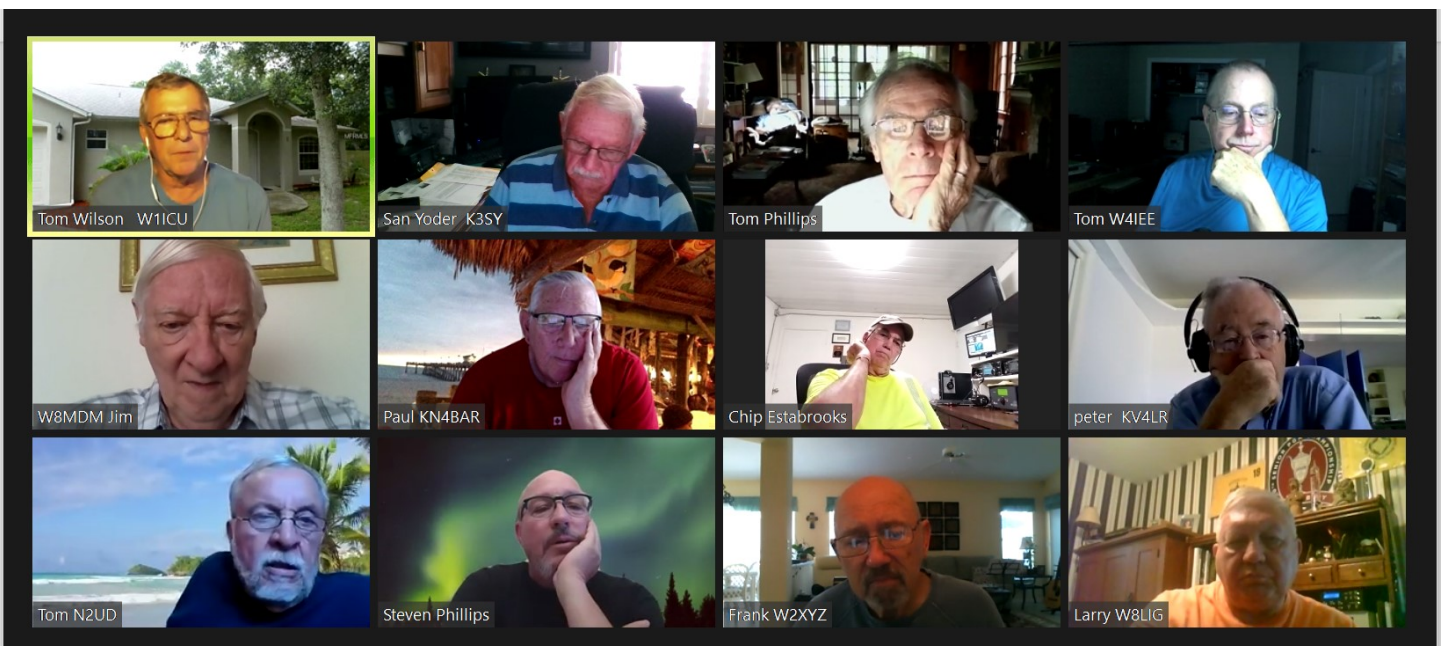
The minutes of our June 10, 2020 meeting will be published in the September issue of The Communicator prior to the September 9th meeting.

We look forward to the time when we can again meet in person. Until then, shown immediately below is the “new normal” for TARC meetings. This is a screen shot of our June board of directors meeting via Zoom. Why is it no one looks particularly happy meeting that way?



Breakfast at ~~Peaches~~ - ~~VFW~~ - ~~I-Hop~~ - Tom's

With the usual breakfast places either closed or restricted, Tom, W1ICU has been hosting “virtual breakfasts” Wednesday mornings at 10:00 via Zoom, giving ample opportunity to talk about all the earth-shaking problems normally discussed over real food.



DX Jack's page....

..... By Jack Sproat, W4JS



MAJOR 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 |
| Antarctica – 8J1RL by 2 JA ops, CW & Digi | Now to Jan '21 | 158 | NO | 01-08 | 08-10 | NO | NO | NO | NO | NO |
| Mongolia – JU85UIA by 6 ops | Now to 31 Dec | 354 | NO | NO | NO | 12-15 | NO | NO | NO | NO |
| Mauritania – 5T5PA by PA5X, mostly FT8 | Now to ??? | 81 | 00-07 | 22-09 | 20-04 | 17-24 | 18-21 | NO | NO | NO |
| Norfolk Is – VK9NK by SP9FIH, CW/Digital | Now to ??? | 250 | NO | 06-12 | 05-13 | 02-06 | 23-04 | 21-03 | NO | NO |
| Uganda – 5X1RI by M0KRI, SSB/FT8 | 01 July – 30 Aug | 78 | NO | 23-04 | 22-24 | 19-22 | 15-19 | NO | NO | NO |
| Balearic Is – EA6/DK5ON, CW/Digital | 01 to 11 July | 55 | -- | 22-08 | 21-04 | 11-01 | 21-22 | NO | NO | NO |
| Vanuatu – YJ40IND by 3 ops, CW/SSB/FT8 | 01 to 31 July | 262 | -- | 06-11 | 05-12 | 03-05 | 1900 | 19-03 | NO | NO |
| Monaco – 3A/IW1RBI, SSB/FT8 | 06 to 19 July | 50 | -- | -- | 21-04 | 11-24 | 21-22 | NO | NO | NO |
| Liechtenstein – HB0/HB9HBY by 2 ops | 24 to 26 July | 46 | 01-05 | 23-07 | 21-04 | 12-24 | NO | NO | NO | NO |
| Estonia – ES0IA, IOTA 'TEST, CW/SSB | 25 – 26 July | 30 | NO | 00-06 | 01-04 | 12-22 | NO | NO | NO | NO |
| Isle of Man – GD/ON6QR, IOTA 'TEST | 25 – 26 July | 41 | 01-06 | 22-08 | 21-02 | 20-22 | NO | NO | NO | NO |
| Greece – J48L by SV2CIJ, IOTA 'TEST | 25 – 26 July | 51 | NO | 23-05 | 22-04 | 11-24 | 2100 | NO | NO | NO |

Prepared 29 June 2020 based on the 29 June 2020 *The Weekly DX*, <https://www.ng3k.com/>, <https://dx-world.net/> and <https://dxnews.com>

Notes: Times shown are for S-5 or better signals and 60% or better opening probability. ??? = Call Sign or Date not yet known; ++ = Mostly SSB; ** = Mostly CW; NO = No Opening forecast, NIL = band is open but signals below S-5 threshold. Long Path bearings and opening times are underlined. All forecasts are calculated using VOACAP <http://www.voacap.com/hf/>.

-- JUNE SOLAR ACTIVITY --

Through 29 June, the 10.7 cm Solar Flux ranged from 67 to 72, with a mean value of 69.6. The A_p index was ≥ 7 on four days during June.

One sunspot group lasted 13 days during the month of June.

-- JULY FORECAST --

Solar activity is expected to be very low over the outlook period.

No proton events are expected at geosynchronous orbit.

The greater than 2 MeV electron flux at geosynchronous orbit is expected to be at normal background levels.

Geomagnetic field activity is expected to be quiet to unsettled. Unsettled conditions are likely on 01 Jul and 06-07 Jul in response to multiple, recurrent CH HSSs. The remainder of the month is likely to observe quiet conditions.

The 10.7 cm Solar Flux is "flat lined" at 68 for the entire month, as well as the A-index being forecast at 5 during all of July.

(From NOAA *Weekly Highlights and Forecasts*, 29 July 2020, NOAA *27-day Space Weather Outlook Table*, 29 July 2020, and 45 *Day AP Forecast*, USAF, 29 July 2020.)

-- CONTEST ACTIVITY --

The IARU HF World Championship is 11 – 12 July; see rules at <http://www.arrl.org/iaru-hf-world-championship>. No info on potential ops.

The RSGB IOTA Contest is 25 – 26 July; see <https://www.rsgbcc.org/hf/rules/2020/riota.shtml>. As there is a dearth of scheduled DX for July, the better potential contest stations planning to participate have been listed above.

While there is never contest activity on the WARC (12, 17 and 30m) bands, propagation is shown for stations participating in the RSGB IOTA Contest as such stations often warm up and operate on those bands before and after such contests.

-- 13 COLONIES SPECIAL EVENT --

Once again the annual (the 12th) "13 Colonies Special Event" will take place between 1300z, July 1st and 0400z July 7th. Fifteen SE stations will be participating: K2A (NY), K2B (VA), K2C (RI), K2D (CT), K2E (DE), K2F (MD), K2G (GA), K2H (MA), K2I (NJ), K2J (NC), K2K (NH), K2L (SC), and K2M (PA) for the 13 states, WM3PEN, in Philadelphia, PA, where independence was declared, and sister event station. GB13COL from Durham, England. Stations working one state or, as many as all 15 stations, will be eligible for the event's certificate. A "Clean Sweep" indicator will be affixed for those working all 15. A special endorsement will be attached for stations contacting their sister operation.

QSL info and how to obtain the special certificate, see: <http://www.13colonies.us> (TNX Ohio/Penn DX Bulletin No. 1470)

-- UNDERSTANDING HF PROPAGATION --

Rohde & Schwarz has prepared a video explaining the fundamental concepts of HF propagation, with special emphasis placed on sky-wave propagation and the role of the ionosphere. To see this 20-minute video, go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Y_RTdPs3NI&pbjreload=101 (TNX Tony DeAngelo - N2MFT, President, Mid Florida DX Association)

Focus on Field Day

The ARRL Field Day event gets more participation than any other amateur radio activity. In 2019, over 36,000 stations were on the air during the last weekend in June calling, "CQ Field Day." A great many of those stations were club stations with anywhere from two or more members to several dozen members participating. I guesstimate that somewhere between 50,000 to 100,000 hams were active that weekend.

By Frank, W2XYZ

It looked like COVID-19 was going to ruin Field Day 2020. We certainly couldn't invite the public to see how amateur radio operators set up outdoors and provide communications during a man-made or natural disaster with minimal preparation during the current pandemic. Having one virus-stricken member shouting into a microphone or an infected public onlooker in the group could potentially infect a whole community. Having a "Normal Field Day" would not be prudent in 2020. There was even talk the ARRL would cancel the event completely.

If we want to show the world that hams can communicate during disasters, then maybe we should figure out for ourselves how we can communicate during the current disaster. The ARRL modified its Field Day rules for this year (hopefully never again). It was recommended we operate from our homes or mobiles rather than extensive club stations with many members attending. Club stations were still permitted to operate, but were expected to do so in a socially acceptable and safe way. The big deal is normally

home stations may not contact other home stations, they can only contact



W4IEE

Tom, W4IEE refueling while collecting bonus points for powering his rig with electrons from his solar-powered golf cart.



KN4BAR

Paul, KN4BAR, cooling his heels while sharing his lanai with his portable antenna setup.



Field Day - Stations + Ops

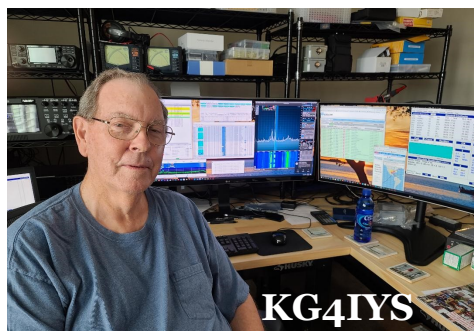
→ club stations or EOC stations. For 2020, home stations were permitted to contact everyone, including other home stations. That's great and the really cool part is the points they earned at their home station, they could credit to their radio club.

During a "Normal Field Day," a club might have one, or two, or maybe even three transmitters on the air at one time. This year we were allowed to have as many transmitters on the air at the same time as we have members and the points each member earned is summed together for the member's club. In theory, Tamiami ARC could have had 122 stations all calling CQ at the same time and earning many points for the club. That certainly would give us a better score than we would have had with our one, two, or maybe three transmitters on the air.

So, how did we do? Ask me how we did several months from now. I don't know how we did because the results of our efforts won't be known until the December issue of QST where scores are publicized. I do have a gut feeling that we did pretty darn good. I know of about 15 club members that participated in Field Day and I suspect there are even more than that. With 15 or more members pooling their points for TARC, we should have a substantial score this year.

My personal feeling is I had a good time operating from home. A lot more comfortable, no bugs, sleep or take a nap in a real bed, no bugs, food and refreshments readily available, and I didn't have to deal with

any of those pesky bugs. I did miss the camaraderie and the group efforts of problem-solving when issues would arise. I also missed being able to show young people, like scouts, just what this group of old guys do as a hobby and how it could help the community in times of need. I missed the team effort we showed in erecting antennas, tents, and establishing power. I had a good time, but hope we are able to have a "Normal Field Day" in 2021.
73, Frank, W2XYZ



Tom is fixin' to fix WSJT-X after too many dropouts!



VE Update

Due to closure of all Sarasota County library facilities, the TARC VE Team did not hold testing sessions in April or May. Once it became apparent that the meeting rooms at the library would not be available for the foreseeable future, the team resumed testing in June at the residence of Patti (N4IGI) and Steve (NS4P). Tom (W4IEE), who lives in the same neighborhood, volunteered to serve as the required third VE. Due to available space, the number of VEs at the sessions was kept to the minimum required.

Testing was held outdoors under the covered portion of the lanai. A ceiling fan and box fans provided a cooling breeze. Candidates were spaced six feet apart with face masks required. Test sessions were limited to four candidates per session with two sessions held on the same day allowing the team to serve eight candidates. Tables, pens and pencils were sanitized between sessions.

For June, eight candidates were present. Seven earned their Technician license, and one upgraded from General to Extra.

For July, nine candidates were present (we found a spot for one more). Two earned Technician, four upgraded to General, and two upgraded to Extra. One candidate took the General exam but did not earn a new license.



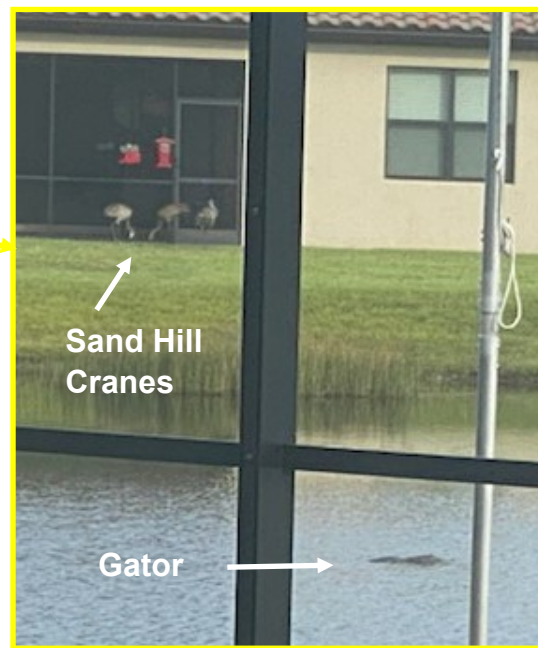
In good news, it appears that the ARRL and FCC are processing the results at close to normal speed - the new license grants for the June session were posted in about 10 days.

While this is not an ideal situation, TARC is continuing to serve the Suncoast amateur radio community despite the challenges. All of us look forward to the day we can resume our normal routine.

73, Steve - NS4P

**Volunteer Examiner Liaison,
Tamiami Amateur Radio Club**

VE testing Florida style



Field Day in accordance with our next-door neighbors to the south - Englewood Amateur Radio Society (EARS)

Notes from Jim, W4AII e-mail

14 total attended, including 4 visitors: Fred KB3UTS who rejoined club, 2 future hams from Boca Grande, a SK ham's XYL wanting to sell his gear, Blincoe neighbor ham KN4DIY. Vic and Tom Hawes bicycled in! Thanks to our participating: Blincoe, Pellant, Herman, KA8PBA, N9USZ, KE5ODR, and Pam for making it a BIG SUCCESS, despite virus concerns.



2 VHF UHF antennas. Pellant's log periodic beam for my Winlink EMAILS sent out via county EOC internet email gateway, BYPASSING all commercial cell and broadband internet(!). plus j-pole for K8ONV K8ONV cross-band.

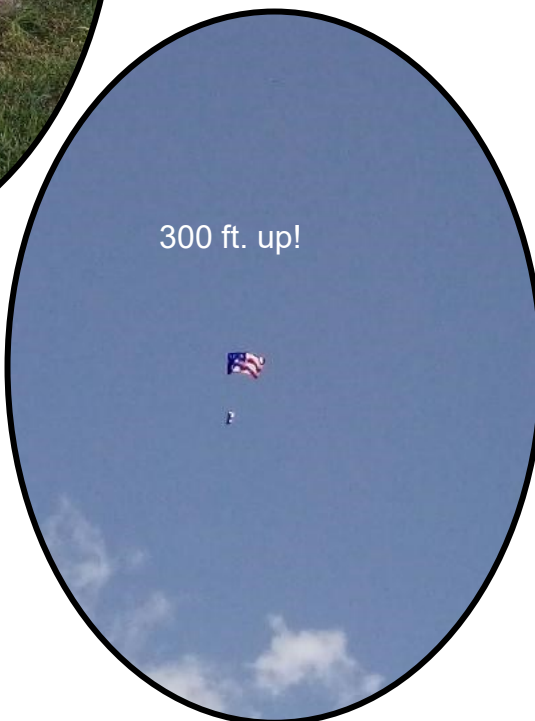


2+ HF rigs, plus K8ONV VHF for reliable talk-in via my cross-band to our UHF simplex handhelds. Made a few 15, 20, and 40 M QSOs, but most fun was making all the tech work.



3 HF antennas. Blincoe's KITE ELEVATED his EFHW long-wire(!), tree EFHW, and a dipole.

Blincoe's SOLAR and BATTERY powered ALL our rigs (!), plus Herman's gas generator as backup. Thanks to Blincoe, who grilled Bubba Burgers that fueled our lunch on a hot day!



Is your call heavy or light?

By Tom, W4IEE
(Call weight 40)

Did you know that your call letters have a weight associated with them? Well they do. The metric is named, appropriately, CW Call Weight and it may impact your CW sending performance especially in contests, maybe.

The jury is out about whether or not the weight really matters. I suspect that some of our die hard CW testers would argue in the positive. Some say, especially from the old days of using a hand key, that the 'swing' or having a 'good fist' mattered more than anything to get your call out there and be easily recognized. But, you be the judge!

So how do you determine CW weight?

You may (should?) know that a dot/dit is one unit in length, a dash/dah 3 units, the space between dots & dashes is one unit and the space between characters is 3 units long. There is also a generally adapted website standard that adds 3 space units at the end of a call. This is done so that all website weight calculators come up with the same numbers for any given call.

Here's an example of imaginary call **Y1XE**

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Y > dah(3), space(1), dit(1), space(1), dah(3), space(1), dah (3) | [13] |
| character space | [3] |
| 1 > dit(1), space(1), dah(3), space(1), dah(3), space(1), dah (3),space(1), dah(3) | [17] |
| character space | [3] |
| X > dah(3), space(1), dit(1), space(1), dit(1), space(1), dah(3) | [11] |
| character space | [3] |
| E > dit(1) | [1] |
| end of call space as noted above | [3] |
| Total | 54 |

You'll also notice that reciprocals have the same weight. Y = Q, X = P, N = A, etc.

The lowest weight calls in 4 land are N4EE or A4EE [30], not including special event calls like N4E [26].

What's the heaviest call weight in 4 land? YOU tell me!!

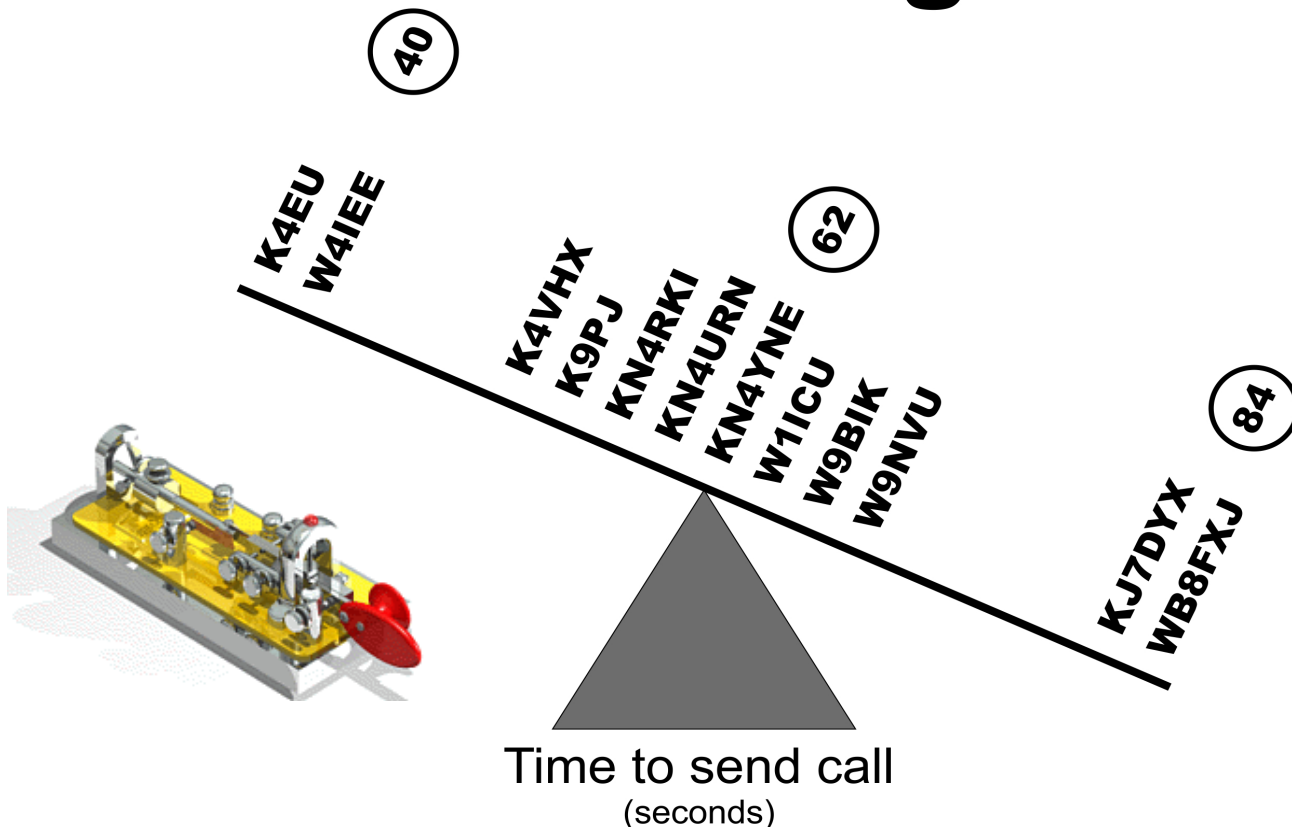
Looking at the club membership list and running all the weights you can see from the graphic that K4EU & W4IEE have the lowest weight of 40, there's a pack of seven smack dab in the middle with 62 and two very heavy, slow roasted, Virginia baked hams truly anchoring the club at 84!

You will also see on the graphic the 'time to send' associated with these three call groups. Notice that at 20 wpm it takes more than twice as long for the heavy weights to send their calls compared to the light weights!

By the way, W4AC comes in at a slender weight of 48.

Here's an online calculator if you want to play around with CW weights hosted by the FISTS Club <https://fistsna.org/callweight.php>

CW Call Weight



| | | | |
|--------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| @13WPM | 3.42 | 5.45 | 6.48 |
| @20WPM | 2.22 | 3.54 | 4.86 |

Note, in the past there was also a Phone Call Weight, based upon an average (?) person speaking their call letters using the standard military style phonetics at an average (?) speed, but, alas, I could not find a reference to it anymore.

So, what's the lightest US call you can think of, and what's the heaviest?

Assuming a 1/2 or a 2/1 call (not counting special event 1/1 calls), and a 2/3 here's what your editor came up with. **Can you find a lighter or heavier one?**

N5EE = dah(3), sp(1), dit(1), char sp(3), dit(1), sp(1), dit(1), sp(1), dit(1), sp(1), dit(1), sp(1), dit(1), char sp(3), dit(1), char sp(3), dit(1), end of call sp(3). **Total = 28** Apologies to Mr. Mills for using his call as an example.

KJ0JYQ = dah(3), sp(1), dit(1), sp(1), dah(3), char sp(3), dit(1), sp(1), dah(3), sp(1), dah(3), sp(1), dah(3), char sp(3), dah(3), sp(1), dah(3), sp(1), dah(3), sp(1), dah(3), char sp(3), dit(1), sp(1), dah(3), sp(1), dah(3), sp(1), dah(3), char sp(3), dah(3) sp(1), dit(1), sp(1), dah(3), sp(1), dah(3), char sp(3), dah(3), sp(1), dah(3), sp(1), dit(1), sp(1), dah(3), end of call sp(3). **Total=98.**



A small contingent of TARC fox hunters braved the Corona-world to cull the skulk in the West Villages area on Saturday, June 20th. The odiferous fellow was found in a garbage can somewhere in Florida. Here W2XYZ and NS4P reveal the critter's hiding place.

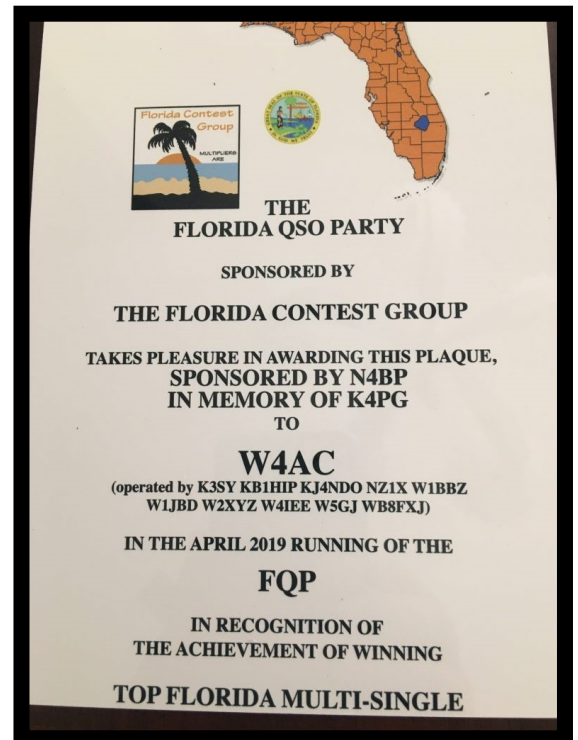
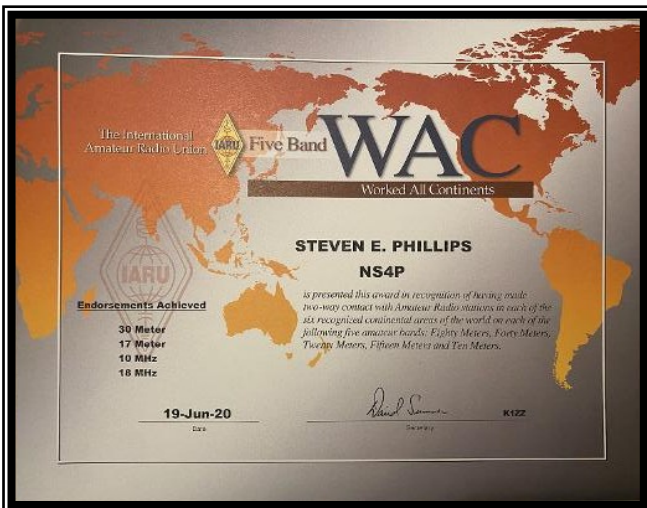
There was some speculation as to the nature of the beast. Since raccoons are notorious garbage can raiders, could it be the animal was mis-identified? Only KN4BAR knows for sure!



Certificates US

A couple of notable wall hangings were acquired recently by TARC members. Steve, NS4P received his 5-band Worked All Continents sheepskin. Quite an accomplishment using an undetectable stealth HOA antenna.

And, TARC's W4AC group took the honor of top Florida multi-single group in the Florida QSO Party. KUDOS





July/August 2020

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|----------------------|-----|---------------------------------|---|--|-----|-------------------------------|
| 12 | 13 | 14 <i>DMR net @ 7:30 PM</i> | 15 | 16 <i>TARC net @ 7:30 PM</i> | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 <i>W4AC 444.1 TAC 315</i> | 22 | 23 <i>W4AC/RPT 146.805 ** +10M net 28.450</i> | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 <i>VE testing @ NS4P</i> |
| 9 <i>DARN Net</i> | 10 | 11 | 12 <i>Next TARC meeting September 09</i> | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | |

THE COMMUNICATOR is a publication of the Tamiami Amateur Radio Club (TARC). It is published monthly; except during the summer months, the July and August issues will be 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 - Webmaster - Paul Nienaber, KN4BAR.

Editor - San Yoder, K3SY, who acknowledges and thanks these contributing writers this month: Jim Shortill, KJ4NDO, Jack Sproat, W4JS, Tom Porada, W4IEE, Steve Phillips, NS4P, Jim Nelson, W4All, and Frank Wroblewski, W2XYZ.

Articles of general interest to club members are solicited and welcomed. Please submit photos and/or copy (preferably in Word) to : k3sy@arrl.net. 73, San

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TAMIAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC. - Membership Application

NAME _____ Call Sign _____ Class _____ ARRL? Yes ___ No ___
 LOCAL ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ ZIP _____
 PHONE _____ CELL _____ e-mail _____
 SUMMER ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 PHONE _____ ALT. e-mail _____
 Application date _____ PAYMENT: Amount _____ by: Check ___ Cash ___ PayPal ___ First year free ___

For payments by mail send to:

TAMIAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.

PO Box 976

Nokomis, FL 34274

Web site www.tamiamiarc.org payments accepted via PayPal [Add \$1.00 convenience fee].

Dues:

Regular member: \$20.00/year

After 6/1 - \$10.00 to year end. After 10/31 \$20.00 thru next year.

Family membership: \$25.00/year. Non-voting student: \$5.00/year.

New licensee: 1/1 to 10/31 - free to year end.

11/1 to 12/31 - free thru next year.

Please note: After two month grace period thru Feb., non-renewals will be dropped.

TARC web site: <http://www.tamiamiarc.org>

Contact: Secretary, Patti Phillips, N4IGI - secretary@tamiamiarc.org

