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Special points of interest:

- Amateur Radio Training Class finishes up with testing session on March 5.
- Tune in to the Sunday ARES nets on 146.655 MHz and keep up to date with Amateur Radio in our area.
- Please visit our web site! It has a great forums section, and lots of other good amateur radio related information and links. Point your web browser software to <http://www.k4tlh.net>.

President's QSO

There is plenty going on with TARS these days—take your pick: an emergency drill in conjunction with “Operation Dark Cloud”, Special event for the Challenger Learning Center, Annual Auction, TOSRV, Spring Cookout, and Field Day. Surely, something here might interest you? For me, I’m especially looking forward to Field Day and the Spring cookout.

Most immediately, our meeting program for March will be an overview of the K4TLH repeaters. Photographs of the site locations, and equipment will be shown by Randy Pierce (AG4UU). As always, a big pat-on-the-back to Randy for maintaining our repeaters. Thanks, Randy!

Thanks also to those assisting with the radio classes being taught at

the Red Cross. Its always a good thing to grow the hobby. [KG4KLR, N4KGT, N4IPH, NZ4QJ, AD4E, W1XO, AG4UT, AG4UU, WA4WES, AC4TO, and KC4TOC] The classes will conclude Wednesday, March 05, 2003 with an on-site exam.

Less than a week after the meeting program is Operation Dark Cloud. This is a *no-holds-barred* emergency drill to be held in conjunction with the American Red Cross. Its date is Wednesday, March 12. Dave Davis (WA4WES) is coordinating this—see Dave’s article later in the newsletter. Don’t discount *your* importance as an amateur radio operator. It is a special privilege and we rise above the rest in terms of communications abilities and talents!

Next up is our involvement in the dedication of the Challenger Learning Center/Mary Brogan Sci-

ence Center (downtown Tallahassee) on March 22. Our Vice-President, Brett (KG4KLR), has been working closely with Dr. Tom Harrison (W9PBA), to coordinate this event. One of the highlights is a scheduled QSO with the International Space Station (ISS)! Several dignitaries will be on-hand for this dedication.

For April, our meeting program will be the “Annual Equipment Auction”. I’ve already nominated Randy Pierce as the auctioneer. Personally, I enjoy his humor. The auction is used to supplant our treasury, so its requested that sellers donate 10% of the selling price to the club.

Later in April, we will be supporting the Capital City Cyclists, www.cccyclists.org for the 22nd annual riding of the “Tour of Springtime Rural Vistas South” also

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VP's Corner

An incredible opportunity is around the corner for us as a group. The grand opening of the Challenger Learning Center in downtown Tallahassee will be Saturday, March 22nd. You've probably seen the billboards, newspaper ads,

or TV commercials. A tremendous amount of work has gone into this, and because of a few phone calls, amateur radio will be one of the interests on display for the public. The Tallahassee Amateur Radio Society has been asked to

have the emergency communications van on display, as well as some operators active, throughout the day. We will be operating the special event station under the calls K4TLH and will print up special

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Meeting Minutes—February 2003

There were 23 individuals in attendance, two of which were guests.

Program

Tom Brooks (K4TB) presented a very informative presentation on circular polarization of antennas, and for what they are used.

Treasurer's Report

Checking Balance: \$321.34; Savings Balance forward: \$2646.45, Deposits: \$724.50 [\$555 - dues, \$169.50 - donations]; Total in Savings as of meeting date: \$3370.95

Testing

There will be a regular testing session at 6:00 p. m., on Wednesday the 5th instead of Tuesday at the American Red Cross Chapter House. Please bring in a copy of your driver's license, and any CSCE's that you might have. For more information about testing sessions, please visit the club web site at <http://www.k4tlh.net>.

Repeaters

Repeaters are doing well,

however, 442.1 is down due to testing of EMS communications, so it is currently being used for that capacity. Randy is working on refurbishing some radio equipment for the American Red Cross. The LMB for the Shuttle link is down, therefore the last mission was not re-broadcast on 146.91. Given the unfortunate circumstances, this was probably a good thing. Randy is looking for someone with the particular equipment to re-align the LMB for the Shuttle link.

David (WE4RA) asked about the attack delay of incoming signals on the 147.03 machine. Randy confirmed that this condition does exist, and that there is a 250 - 500ms delay due to noise/interference suppression efforts implemented at the site. This may also be a result of the VoIP (voice over IP) testing going on this machine. Randy said he would bounce this off Midland to see if they have any ideas.

Break

Old Business

Dues for 2003 are due. If you haven't already, please send your dues in -- and if you have, thank you very much!

800MHz Radios up for donation - Carlton Wells (AG4UT), agreed to handle this task. At this point, David Myers (W4USA) the person who helped make this equipment available to us, is waiting for paperwork to be signed off by upper management so he can get the equipment to Carl. Once Carl receives the equipment, he'll check it all out and get it as serviceable as possible for us.

New Business

Some club members were going to look into ways to get the club some more public awareness. Patrick Innes (KC5UGQ) is going to look into community calendar announcements on WFSU-TV, and Rhett White (KB4CTV) is going to look into print announcements in the Tallahassee Democrat.

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Testing session date changed to March 5, 2003. See the club Home Page for more info.

Meeting Minutes

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Randy wanted to have approved up to \$100 for repair of the NASA downlink module on the 146.91 machine. There was a motion that was seconded, voted upon and so moved to approved up to \$100 for this repair/maintenance.

Williams Communications, Inc. graciously donated some older surplus equipment to TARS, which consisted of some speakers, some foot switches, and eight GE Phoenix UHF radios. From the eight units, we got seven working units. The Phoenix radios are basically 25-watt single, or dual-channel units, so not of much use for today's amateur operator, but

would be ideal for use in an emergency situation. . Randy proposed that the club in turn put this equipment to use as jump-kit installations at the designated American Red Cross shelters in the area. Randy has already cleaned up and programmed the units to operate on 442.85 MHz. Carl Wells spoke a moment about home-brewing some antennas to deploy with the radios. No objections were voice during the discussion of this issue, and Randy would proceed with the equipment as planned.

As the electrical circuits have been installed at the Red Cross, a working party will be called in the near future to complete the shelving and ra-

dio installations at the chapter house.

The American Red Cross will be holding a disaster drill/mock terrorism/mass casualty exercise – Operation Dark Cloud, on Wednesday, March 12, 2003. Several local EOC's along with the ARC will be working the event. Operators are requested to assist with logistics and communication. Contact David Davis (WA4WES) for more information.

TOSRV South – The Tour of Springtime Rural Vistas/South is April 12-13, 2003. This is the weekend long 200-mile cycling event. Please mark your calendars! This is an all-

President's QSO

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known as TOSRV. The dates for this are Saturday and Sunday, April 12-13. In a nutshell, bicyclists ride from Quincy, Florida to Albany, Georgia and back over the two days. Radio operators are urgently needed for this event. If you can spare even an hour or two, that's fine—we need you! Although some operators are requested to be on-site at the start, we realize this isn't always possible nor "required". Just call us on the repeater when you become available and the net control operator will assign you as needed. The start (and finish) location is at the Quincy Recreation

Center, 122 North Graves St., in Quincy. See http://www.cccyclists.org/map_quincy.php for a map. More information will be forthcoming as it becomes available. This is a good opportunity for us to work with the folks associated with our nearby radio clubs, the Thomasville Amateur Radio Club, (<http://home.rose.net/~wd4cji/w4ucj.htm>), and the Albany Amateur Radio Club, (<http://www.qsl.net/w4mm>). Anyone with GPS position reporting capabilities (APRS) is especially needed.

We will have our Spring Cookout on the regular meeting evening in May.

The cookout will begin at 5:45-6:00 p.m. and go until sundown. We need to decide on a location soon. Think about where you would like to enjoy this family outing and so that we can make a decision during our April meeting.

Field Day will be the last full weekend in June. We already have volunteers to be station captains for one HF station and the GOTA station. We need someone to coordinate the effort itself and volunteers for logging, food and related support functions. Contact me with any comments or suggestions. More information is at the ARRL's web-site: <http://>



Major events
occurring over
the next two
months—
Operation Dark
Cloud, and
TOSRV

Operation Dark Cloud—Mock Terrorism Exercise

A major disaster preparedness drill is scheduled for Wednesday March 12, 2003 in Tallahassee. Considerable federal funding will be spent, and most of the emergency response agencies, from the police and sheriff's departments to the Red Cross, will participate. Specifically, the Red Cross and the Leon County, Tallahassee, and

State EOCs will be involved, and have requested amateur radio assistance. The concept of the simulated disaster will involve a bombing and gas attack at a home game at Doak Campbell stadium. Simultaneously, there will be an explosion at the fuel supply point in St. Marks. The exercise officially starts at 10 a.m. and will

run until about 4 p.m. on Wednesday.

This is a very high visibility exercise, and it will provide a rare opportunity to show state and federal leaders at the highest levels and the emergency management community what amateur radio can accomplish.

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Support
Amateur
Radio—get
involved!

VP's Corner

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QSL cards to be distributed for a contact. Here's the kicker: Dr. Norm Thagard is aware of our presence and has graciously offered his assistance in arranging for a contact with the International Space Station that evening! This is an extremely rare opportunity and we need to take full advantage of it. There are some very specialized things involved to make a contact with the ISS, so if you have any experience with this, please don't hesitate to speak up. The publicity that our club and hobby could get from this has great potential, and I think we should make every effort to fully expand on it..

Another effort that has almost come to completion is the intro class at the Ameri-

can Red Cross facility. Thanks to everyone that has participated in some form or fashion to make this happen. Even before the testing session, I am willing to say it has been a great success. With close to 20 students, we have not only trained some of the longstanding Red Cross volunteers, but also some others from our community interested in joining our hobby. When you hear the new call signs on the air, be sure to welcome them to ham radio.

A few weeks ago, Chris Floyd from the American Red Cross was on the Sunday night ARES net via phone patch and talked at length about Operation Dark Cloud on Wednesday, March 12th. If you have an opportunity to participate,

it would be greatly appreciated. Exercises like these give us an opportunity to throw a folded up J-pole over a tree limb on the side of the road from a strategic location and test our signal strength from the field. If you are interested in participating, please contact your ARES Emergency Coordinator for your county in advance so they can make the appropriate plans. In Leon County, contact Dave Davis at dave.davis1@worldnet.att.net, or in Wakulla County contact me, Brett Welllman, at kg4klr@arrl.net.

Finally, TOSRV is coming up the weekend of April 12-13. If you've never worked it, make plans for it this year. TARS provides communications assistance

Operation Dark Cloud

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I need radio operators to man stations at the three EOCs, the Red Cross headquarters, and another Red Cross station at Doak Campbell stadium. I am also very much interested in finding operators who have experience, or are willing to learn how to run a digital (i.e. packet) station. The Red Cross wants to

send some data through that means. The TARS van, which will be at the disaster site, has digital capability, and I need one more station at the Red Cross HQ.

I can use operators on Wednesday who can operate only an hour or two. If you have digital experience, I can promise the Red Cross will feed you. Actually, they will feed anyone who

shows up. If you would like to help, please let me know ASAP. I will give you additional instructions of what to do then. My email address is dave.davis1@att.net, or you can call me at 562-3660 (H) or 488-2458 ext 226 (W)

VP's Corner

along with the Thomasville and Albany amateur radio clubs for the Capital City Cyclist members on their 200 mile/2 day bike ride from Quincy to Albany and back. It's a wonderful way to not only test your equipment, but also yourselves, out in the field.

73,
Brett Wellman
KG4KLR
Home: 926-9662
Work: 574-5872
kg4klr@arrl.net

President's QSO

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www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2003/rules-fd-2003.html

As always, newsletter content is requested from you, our members. Also, we need a meeting program for the month of May. Would someone like to give us an overview and introduction to Software Defined Radios (SDR)? Or, perhaps some other subject of interest to *you*.

As a final thought, consider that SWR is unrelated to an antenna's radiation efficiency.

73, Steve – AD4E



Challenger Learning Center is opening March 22—try to make the event, and be there when Tallahassee talks to the International Space Station!



Amateur Radio
Around the
World

We're on the Web!
<http://www.k4tlh.net>



<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/tars>

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Upcoming Events/Nets

Testing Session:
7:00 p. m. EDT on the
first Tuesday of odd
numbered months, at
2631 Municipal Way in
Tallahassee. For more
information, visit [http://
www.k4tlh.net/testing.
htm](http://www.k4tlh.net/testing.htm).

TARS Meetings: Every
first Thursday of the
month at 7:00 p. m.
EST, unless otherwise
announced.

Friday Lunch: Every
Friday, 11:30 a. m. EST
at Golden Corral on
North Monroe St.

Saturday Breakfasts:
Every Saturday, 8:00
a. m. EST at Golden
Corral on Monroe St.

**Capital District ARES
Net:** Every Sunday,
8:00 p. m. EST on the
AE4S repeater
(146.655).

**North Florida ARES
Net:** Every morning,
except Sunday on 3950
KHz at 9:00 a. m. EST.

**North Florida Phone
Net:** Every evening,
except Sunday on 3950
KHz at 2330 UTC.

Editorial Policy

Submitted material re-
ceived by the editor
from dues-paying mem-
bers in good standing,
on or before the 15th of
the month will appear in
the following month's
newsletter as space per-
mits. Articles published
in *The Printed Circuit*
are not representative
of the views or opinions
of the whole organiza-
tion, and such views
and opinions are of the
individual author(s).
Currently, the editor is
David A. Heupel,
WE4RA.