

THE ANTENNA

BRANDON AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY



September—November 2022

News Highlights!

Hillsborough ARES/RACES Training and Information Net each Thursday at 7:30 pm

Hillsborough County ARES/RACES provides emergency communications in the Tampa Bay area during a critical event. Please join us for our weekly Hillsborough ARES/RACES Information and Training Net on Thursday evenings at 7:30 pm on the W4BCI repeater in Tampa. Receive: 444.225 MHz, Transmit: 449.225 MHz, +5 MHz offset, PL tone 146.2 Hz. We feature info on ARES activities and upcoming EdVantage training classes. All check-ins are welcome!

Hillsborough County ARES/RACES provides emergency communications in the Tampa

Hillsborough County ARES/RACES presented another set of Technician and General Radio License Training Classes on Saturday, November 5 and 19th at 8 am. Click on this link for more details: <https://hillsboroughares.org/events/>

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K4FZU*

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BARS Lifetime Membership Rewarded

The following members were nominated and approved for a lifetime membership in BARS based on long service and dedication to the club.

Bill Johnson, N4NOA



Tony Stone, W4TAS



Doris Haskel, WB9VDT (not present)

Mark Haskel, WB9UJS (not Present)

New BARS Members

At the November meeting we introduced 2 new members to BARS.



Russel Hislip



Jose Morales

Mark Cummerow (Not present)

Jamboree On The Air (JOTA)

On 15 October BARS participate in the annual Scouting Jamboree on the Air (JOTA). This is a program where Amateur radio clubs help with teaching Boy Scouts the skills for the Radio Merit badge. This year the event was at the Church of the Redeemer. BARS staffed 5 stations providing instruction on:

- Radio Direction Finding (Foxhunt)
- Shortwave Radio
- Communications, Customs and Protocol
- Satellite Communications
- Radio Merit Badge Introduction



Hurricane Ian and TS Nicole

Technician Training Class

Skip Argoe, KD4IOF at PSOC Training 5 & 19 Nov 2022

New Members joined BARS:

Russ Hislip N4PGC

Jose Morales KQ4CKU

Mark Cummerow KQ4CRF

Saturday Breakfast at the Recipe Box Family Diner at 0800 on 147 E. Bloomington Ave, Brandon, FL 33511

BARS Club meetings

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM at Redeemer Church, 12404 Boyette Rd, Riverview, FL 33569, and also via Zoom

End of year dinner: 19 December 2022 at the Golden Corral in Brandon

It was September 26, 2022, and Hurricane Ian was heading our way. The Hillsborough County EOC went to Level 1 activation and opened four Special Needs Evacuation Centers along with several General Population centers. I was deployed by ARES/RACES to Erwin Technical College on Hillsborough Ave. After securing our home, I packed up radios, antennas, and coax. In addition, I took clothing, air bed, air pump and other items that I would need for a week-long deployment. I arrived about 3 pm and began to set up.

The school staff was very helpful and gave me a large table and two chairs. Erwin Tech is a large Faraday Cage and the school staff recommended that I set up my station along windows at the front entrance. My radios included an FT-8900 for my base station along with a variety of backup HT's and a Whistler scanner. I was able to monitor the ARES/RACES repeater, the SkyWarn net, Hillsborough County Fire/Rescue and Tampa Fire/Rescue. My antenna is a Diamond X-50 and is mounted on a PA tripod. Being located near the front door led to some questions about what I was doing, so this became a bit of an education opportunity to reach out to the public.

When I found that Erwin was pet friendly, I asked ARES/RACES to deploy Janet (KB4PUM). She and our dog deployed to the Evac Center on Tuesday. At some point, we lost power but the school's generator took over with no problem. From time-to-time Net Control would run a rollcall and we were the first to report that the school's Wi-Fi had gone out. Soon after that, each shelter reported that theirs had gone down, too. We later learned that as a precautionary measure, since the School Board's servers are located in a flood zone, it was disabled to avoid any arcing.

Ham radio communication became useful, even necessary, several times during the event. In our case, our center was running out of diesel fuel to run the backup generators and the shelter management team was in conference in the middle of the building discussing the issue. The EOC needed to get hold of the shelter manager and, of course, there is no cell phone coverage in that room. Net Control gave us a shout and we put the manager in touch with the EOC. Another incident, which was critical, was when St. Joe's South needed to transport a newborn to All Children's in an incubator and no ambulance was available due to the high winds. Net Control went onto the floor of the EOC and spoke to Hillsborough Fire/Rescue who found a unit who was willing to make the run.

Barely a month later, TS Nicole set sights on us. On November 7th Hillsborough County activated Level 3, as did ARES/RACES. I was once again deployed to the Erwin Center which was activated as both a Special Needs center and General Population. It was nice to encounter the same staff as in the previous storm and while the census was small, I'm sure that it was meaningful to residents who made use of the facility.

As a result of these two storms, Hillsborough County has ordered this change in priorities. Primary concern is to cover the Special Needs Centers, and next will be the F/R Battalion Chiefs and last will be the BOCC centers. Gen Pop will not be a priority.

A special thanks and kudos go out to the BARS members who participated in

Hurricane Ian: Skip, KD4IOF, Wayne, KM7YDT, Ron, K4FZU, Janet, KB4PUM, and Ken, WA4NSV.

Ken Watts, WA4NSV

ARES/RACES AEC, Safety Officer

Hurricane Ian Deployment site



Thursday Bagels

We're BACK! Come ONE, Come ALL!

We have reactivated the BARS THURSDAY MORNING BAGELS event on Thursdays at 9:00 am! We're meeting at the same location as in the past:

Einstein Brothers
Bagels

660 West Brandon
Blvd



BARS Name Tags

<https://www.thesignman.com/clubs/brandoncart.html>

About \$20.25

Badge - \$13.50

Clip \$1.50

S&H - \$5.25

Having Bernie Huth's name on the example is a great legacy to a SK.

Great Ham and mentor!

He'll be at the Tampa Bay HamFest next month.

Have a GREAT week!

New York Diner Weekly Breakfast



MARV Work Update By Dana Perrin KM4DTJ

On Saturday 10/22, a group of 9 members met to work on the BARS Van (aka MARV, or Mobile Amateur Radio Vehicle). We removed the table that was previously installed for ARRL Field Day. The table will be taken to Skip's workshop for modification. We plan on installing the modified table and some shelves on November 12. Sometime in December, we plan on completing the installation of desks and shelves.

We also began installation of an AC power connection which will connect the Van to a gasoline generator.

Here Dick Hoff is drilling the pilot hole for the AC connection.



Here above Bill and Dave are assembling the wire to the AC connector.



Janet Watts and Dick Capell are moving the table out of the Van.

We are grateful to everyone who volunteered (not shown: Skip Argoe, JR Calvert, and Dana Perrin). THANK YOU!

Over the next few weeks, Skip will modify the table and finish the shelving that will outfit Van stations 1 and 2. On Saturday, November 12, we will need volunteers to help with moving and installing these shelves and the modified table into the Van. Mark your calendars. Please let me know if you can help on November 12.

After that, Skip will build shelves and a table to outfit Van stations 3 and 4. Sometime in December, maybe the second weekend, we hope to be ready to meet again to move and install these final shelves and table into the Van. More on this later!

MARV work on 11/12/2022 by Jim Stocks

On Saturday 12 November we conducted another work session on the club van. Skip Argoe and his son provided the metal brackets, new desk and cabinet enclosure for installation. While Skip directed Jim Stocks did the drilling and mounting of the new hardware.



Others providing support were Dick Hoff, Tony Stone, Ken and Janet Watts. Next session will be the installation of two additional desks on the right side of the van and mounting the cabinet enclosure.

Upcoming Events

Fred Hendershot is looking for BARS members to volunteer to support the Annual Tampa Bay Hamfest December 9 - 10 2022 at the Plant City Strawberry Festival grounds.

Orlando Hamcation on 10 - 12 February 2023

Park on the Air (POTA) April 1 -2 2023

Dayton Hamvention 19- 21 May 2023 in Xenia Ohio

ARRL Field Day 24 - 25 June 2023

ATTENTION ALL BARS MEMBERS

PROPOSAL FOR RELOCATION OF THE BRANDON VHF REPEATER

PRESENT SITUATION:

The present location of the Brandon VHF repeater will become unavailable in the next few weeks. The county is installing new equipment in the building and will demolish the existing tower. The replacement tower will not accommodate the antenna for our repeater.

At present we do not have a specific site for the VHF repeater. We will try to negotiate the relocation of the VHF repeater to the Lithia site where the Brandon UHF repeater is presently located. This is not absolute and could be changed. As yet another suitable site has not been located. With proper planning and antenna location, we should still get good coverage into the Brandon area. The coverage to the East, South and North should be virtually the same.

We do not know when the "plug will be pulled" on the VHF repeater but best guess is before the end of the year. This is not definite but likely.

The items to be considered in the relocation are as follows:

1. Removal of the repeater rack and other miscellaneous items at the present site. The only large piece of equipment is the rack panel and it will need a pick-up truck and a couple of strong backs to move. The other pieces can be hauled in the trunk of a vehicle.

2. Storage of the equipment until the new site is available. The rack and repeater can be stored at my house. I will keep the repeater and electronic items in air conditioning. There are a couple of pieces that we will no longer need and will be offered to the original owners or dedicated to the scrap heap.

3. Replacement of the coaxial cable to the present antenna. The existing coaxial cable can't be trusted as it will be coiled up when removed from the tower and it may be damaged in removal. It's not economical to take the chance on having a bad cable at the new site and then having to purchase and reinstall new cable. This will double the final installation cost. I have located about 120 ft of 7/8 inch heliax cable but I have no idea if that is enough. Further study is needed regarding this item.

Installation at the Lithia site:

1. At present, the most likely site for the VHF repeater will be at the Lithia site which presently hosts the BARS UHF repeater.
2. The existing antenna may or may not be usable when it is removed from the tower at the present VHF site. It depends on the care used when taking it down. Fortunately, this is a relatively short delivery item. It will be in the \$1100.00 price range if it is needed. Re-installation of the antenna and coaxial cable will be governed by the availability of a tower climber. There is only one vendor that is allowed to do this work for the county but the BARS club will pay him for the work. That will need to be scheduled when we know more about the timing of the move. Cost for the tower climber will be somewhere in the \$1500.00 to \$2000.00 price range. We will also need new coaxial cable, connectors and tower attachment hardware. This will cost approximately \$1500.00.
3. The present rack panel at the Lithia site that houses the UHF repeater can be reconfigured to accommodate the VHF repeater and duplexers. This will also allow us to install the RLC Club Deluxe controller for the VHF side. The UHF side will require more work as, at the original TECO site, a Kenwood unit was used for the UHF repeater. The Yaesu unit requires more hardware and programming for successful operation on the other port of the RLC Club Deluxe controller. Various coaxial jumpers will be required but I have the required parts and tools to make these cables. Maybe I can make some of them in advance when we survey the UHF site and determine the final configuration.
4. At present \$5000.00 has been allocated for the project. I hope that it will be much less than that but it all depends on whether the above estimates are accurate. I believe that the estimates are "worst case" and could be less.
5. Timing is almost completely unknown at present. The VHF repeater downtime could be significant. If so, a temporary site could be set up. The location of this site is up for debate and any ideas would be entertained. If a suitable antenna is available, it would not be a great deal of work to set the repeater up temporarily in an indoor location. The rack would not be used.

Respectfully submitted on 11/22/2022 by Tony Stone, W4TAS.

President's Desk—The final word

Happy Holidays BARS Members!

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Officers of BARS, I would like to extend our well wishes for a happy and safe holiday season. Try to make some time to spend with friends and family, and I hope Santa puts a nice shiny new rig under the Christmas tree for you this year.

I would like to thank the officers and board members who served in positions in 2022, and those that stepped forward to serve for 2023.

As you know, we submitted our application for the ARRL Grant a few weeks ago. While as of this writing we are waiting for the results, we are optimistic on our chances of obtaining the funding we need to complete the MARV project. We hope to have an answer by year end, and we will send an announcement once we have the result. I can't thank the folks who put the application together enough, it was a monumental undertaking!

We have seen our share of challenges this year, and we will no doubt face some next year. I am honored to have been re-elected as your Club President for 2023, and I look forward to what 2023 brings our great organization.

Happy Holidays and 73,

Steve, NS4M