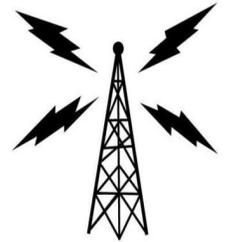




DFARG Signal



Incorporating Palmetto Amateur Radio Club

Volume 3, Issue 4

April 13, 2021

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Field Radio

Second in a Series

All of the Field Radio programs noted in the previous issue have websites with lists of qualified locations from which to activate (links at the end), and rules about how to do so, but I will summarize the main points here, as the rules can sometimes affect equipment choices.

Both POTA and WWFF require you to be within the limits of park you wish to activate, with no other stipulations. You can operate portable, mobile, even, as at least two HAMs I know do, from your home if it is located

within the boundaries of a qualified reference!

The Amateur Radio Lighthouse Society prefers that you operate from the light in question, but allows legal activation to occur within 1,000 meters of the light. If being within 1,000 meters is illegal or impossible, the Society does permit the Visual Sight rule, e.g., you must at least be able to see the light while activating.

Summits on the Air is a bit different than the preceding schemes. The obvious location for activating a summit on the air would be, well, the summit. However, sometimes, even many

times, locating the exact summit of a mountain can be difficult, and frequently, even if one finds it, it can be quite difficult to set up a portable station thereon! SOTA allows you to activate within 25 vertical meters of the actual summit. If you have a topographic map, and understand how contour lines work, finding that zone is relatively simple, as



in this example. Any site within the 310m contour line is valid for an activation.

SOTA is a little finicky about HOW you operate, as well. You cannot use motorized transport to bring your gear into the activation zone. You may hike it in, bike it in, or bring it in on horseback, but you may not use a car, motorcycle, helicopter, or any other motorized transport. Furthermore, your rig must be powered by a portable power source (batteries, solar

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Bomb Island Special Event

The Columbia Amateur Radio Club will operate a special event station commemorating the 79th Anniversary of the Doolittle Raid on Tokyo this Sunday, April 18, from 10:00 AM until 6:00 PM. Stations will operate on Bomb Island in Lake Murray and on boats anchored nearby. CARC will have a trailer set up at 256 John Long Road in Gilbert with music, a display of Doolittle Raid memorabilia, and food for purchase. For information, please visit www.w4cae.com

Cont'd. from page 1

cells, wind generator). Operation is expressly forbidden using permanently installed power sources or fossil-fuel generators of any kind. For this reason, SOTA activations generate more discussion of equipment than any other field radio discipline.

Weight and volume of all equipment are factors if it is all going up the mountain on your back. Not only is your communications gear, transceiver, antenna, and power source, a factor, but protection against the elements requires serious consideration, as well. Mountain weather can be wildly unpredictable, and I have encountered hypothermia-inducing conditions in May and even into June on some higher peaks. Weight and power considerations make CW an obvious popular choice for SOTA activations. HF SSB activations are frequently limited to QRP because of the intersection between battery life and battery weight. Carrying enough battery power to operate SSB for an hour more at 100 watts can make a real difference in the weight of your backpack, as I have learned from painful experience. The availability of Lithium Iron Phosphate and Lithium Polymer batteries is changing this dynamic, though these are still relatively expensive.

By far, the most popular SOTA rigs seem to be the Elecraft KX2 and the Yaesu FT-817 or its replacement, the FT-818. All are lightweight, low power, reasonable compact rigs that can operate on internal batteries. The former is, by just about everybody's estimation, a better quality transceiver overall, which is reflected in the price difference. It also takes up a little less volume in your backpack. One significant advantage of the FT-818 is the ability to operate on 2M and 70CM FM. Although repeater contacts are not valid for SOTA activations, the very nature of operating from a mountaintop makes FM simplex a viable mode. In fact, some activators operate solely with an HT. Nothing generates more discussion among HAMS than antennas, and that holds true among SOTA activators. My own SOTA experiences include 20m and 40m dipoles, a 20m-30m-40m linked dipole, a home-brew QRP magnetic loop, and 20m, 30m, and 40m MFJ base-loaded telescoping whips. The latter take up the least room in the backpack and have proven satisfactory, though not exceptional,

under most conditions. The dipoles rock, but getting them in the air can be a challenge. Most Southeastern mountains have trees within the activation zone and a simple shot bag attached to a long piece of cord is sufficient to get them high enough to be effective. Out West, however, you'll need a mast of some sort, and if you're using a mast, you'll have to have a method of guying it. More space and weight in the backpack!

There is a British company, SOTABeams, which has (finally) begun retailing their products in the US through DX Engineering. As their name suggests, they focus on outfitting the SOTA activator and I have found their products to be solid performers for reasonable cost.



<https://wwfkff.wordpress.com/>



<https://www.sota.org.uk/>



<https://arlhs.com/>



<https://parksontheair.com/>

Upcoming Regional Hamfests and Conventions

04/17/2021 - AJARC Hamfest 2021
 Location: Greeneville, TN
 Sponsor: Andrew Johnson Amateur Radio Club
 Website: <https://greenevillehamfest.com/>

04/24/2021 - Calhoun Hamfest
 Location: Resaca , GA
 Sponsor: Cherokee Capital Amateur Radio Society

04/24/2021 - Online - ARRL Virginia Section Convention 2021
 Location: Vienna , VA
 Sponsor: Vienna Wireless Society
 Website: <https://viennawireless.net/wp/events/>

04/24/2021 - Savannah Area Swap Meet Hamfest
 Location: Savannah, GA
 Sponsor: Coastal Amateur Radio Society
 Website: http://coastalamateurradiosociety.net/wpW4LHSblog/?page_id=1001

05/01/2021 - Fayette Tailgate
 Location: Fayette, AL
 Sponsor: West Alabama Amateur Radio Club
 Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/586474361391035>

05/15/2021 - Tailgate
 Location: Clarksville , TN
 Sponsor: Clarksville Amateur Transmission Society
 Website: <http://KF4L.org>

05/29/2021 - Wormfest
 Location: Pinellas Park, FL
 Sponsor: The Glorious Society of The Wormhole
 Website: <http://w4orm.org/>

Regional Net Schedule

All Times in Eastern Time Zone

| | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|------|---|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--------|--------------------------------------|
| | South Carolina SSB Net 1900 3.915 | | | | | | |
| | Coastal Carolina Emergency Net 1900 3.907 | | | | | | |
| | South Coast Amateur Radio Service 0800-1100 7.251 | | | | | | |
| | Intercontinental Amateur Traffic Net 0700-1100 14.300 | | | | | | |
| | Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network 1100 14.265 | | | | | | |
| | 7240 Club 1000-1200 7.240 | | | | | | |
| | | - - | - - | - - | - - | - - | - - |
| | | - - | - - | - - | - - | - - | - - |
| | | - - | - - | - - | - - | - - | - - |
| 1930 | | Little Mountain 147.210 + T156.7 | | | | | |
| 2000 | | Kershaw ARC 146.775 - T156.7 | Sandlapper SSB 50.250 | | Calhoun ARES 146.670 - T 156.7 | | |
| 2030 | Columbia ARC 147.33 + T 156.7 | | Lexington ARES 147.000 + T123.0 | Columbia ARC 147.33 + T 156.7 | | | |
| 2100 | Ridge ARC 146.550 Simplex | | | | Greenwood ARS 147.165 + T 107.2 | | Ridge ARC First Saturday 3.959 |
| | Ridge ARC 147.255 + T123.0 after simplex | | | | | | |

March, 2021 Minutes

Members in attendance:
 John Miller K4IG
 Maria Ducharme KN4KHK
 Hardy Plemmons W4ABI
 Timothy Smith K4OIW
 David Graham WB4FDG
 Don Drzkworiski WB2WEO
 Al Bucholz WB4YYX
 Bill Weathersbee KK4UX
 Charles Carmichael AB4HI
 Jack Jackson W4EFZ
 Charlie Brown KD4CB

The monthly DFARG meeting commenced at 1852 Hours March 18 th, 2021.

John Miller started the meeting by welcoming all attending members. John Miller also discussed CW class would begin at the adjournment of the meeting. These classes will continue after each meeting until completion.

Charlie Brown KD4CB was the winner for the club contact contest for 2020 (congratulations). The new contest has started for 2021 which requires a contact each day when possible with the totals being compared at the end of 2021. Good luck.

The club is in the process of inventorying all the equipment, parts and pieces to determine the surplus which will be sold to support club finances.

Timothy Smith is heading up the inventorying of all the club equipment.

Timothy Smith discussed the use of the club amplifier. That it should be limited to the operators who are familiar with its operation. Discussion continued with no decision arrived at.

Progress continues in the removal and repair of the antennas with the tower climber to remove antennas and coax and repair as needed. Jack

Treasurer's Report

31 March Balance: \$ 2,290.75.
 Debits: Gas \$4.24
 Insurance \$208.81
 Balance \$2077.70

Jackson discussed the expense of the coax as well. This will be an ongoing project. Funding for the antenna repairs was discussed while no solution was arrived at, ideas are welcome. Progress is being made.

Bill Weathersbee KK4UX has a 1500-watt amplifier for sale. A Ameritron al-811. For more information Bill can be reached at 865weathersbee@bellsouth.net.

A suggestion was made to install a donated radio at the GOTA (Get On The Air) work station. The idea was received well and will be implemented soon.

Club internet has not worked for some time. Presently the issue has been presented to the town of Little Mountain and hopefully resolution will be soon. It was requested that an up to date membership roster, with contact information, be created. Charlie Brown volunteered to lead the project. Membership fees are due. Presently the dues are thirty dollars which would count as a family membership.

February 2021 club meeting minutes were accepted by the attending members and seconded.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 1925 Hour with all in favor of adjournment.

Upcoming Contests

April
 17-18 [EA QRP CW](#)
 18 [ARRL Rookie Roundup-Phone](#)
 24 [QRP to the Field](#)
 24-25 [Florida QSO Party](#)
 May
 1-2 [ARI International DX](#)
[New England QSO Party](#)
[Indiana QSO Party](#)
[Call Region 7 QSO Party](#)
[Delaware QSO Party](#)
 8-9 [Day of the YLs](#)
[Arkansas QSO Party](#)
 15-16 [King of Spain CW](#)
 21 [Hamvention QSO Party](#)
 22 [YOTA](#)

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.W4DFG.ORG

Upcoming DXpeditions:

For more information go to <https://www.ng3k.com/>

| Start | End | DXCC | Call |
|-------|-------|--------------------|-----------|
| Apr08 | May01 | Greenland | OX3LX |
| Apr11 | Apr18 | Somalia | T5/IT9HRK |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | Armenia | EK6RL |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | Bolivia | CP6UA |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | Dominican Republic | HI3DX |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | Ecuador | HI3DX |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | Eswatini | 3DA0AQ |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | Guatemala | TG9ADM |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | Guatemala | TG9AOR |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | Kenya | 5Z4PA |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | New Caledonia | FK8IK |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | Paraguay | ZP4KFX |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | Peru | OA1F |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | Peru | OA4DX |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | Surinam | PZ5JW |
| Apr17 | Apr18 | Virgin Is | NP2J |
| Apr20 | Apr29 | Wake I | WW6RG/KH9 |
| Apr23 | Apr30 | Ogasawara | JD1BQA |
| Apr26 | May09 | Svalbard | JW6VDA |

Ham Humor

“Looks like we’ll be QRT for a bit....”

