RADIOWAVES$_{qrp}$

The MARCI Newsletter

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MANATEE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB.INC.
K4GG
BRADENTON, FL.
HOLIDAY PARTY
December 1st, 2026
Peridia Golf and Country Club
4950 Peridia Boulevard East
Bradenton, Fl
6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
RSVP to Club Treasurer
$47.50
per/person
Includes Taxes / Tip

From the Editor – John Hartman, KQ4MTF

One more newsletter before the end of the year! It's Florida so we don't feel the year's end like many of us did as children. But here it is. This is the season for which many of us moved here. And the season that our native members rue. Either way, this prior month is when more than a few of our members returned to Florida. To all of our members who QSY FL, 73!

As we go into the last club meeting of the year, don't forget to submit your nominations for Ham of the Year and Elmer of the Year by the 14th. Jot down a few words about your choice, if you wish. And email it to this newsletter at mailto:k4gg.newsletter@gmail.com. The 14th gives us time to go through the names and get the awards made.

Veteran's Day is coming up, on the 11th. Give the vets in your life a thank you, if you get a chance.

You can send submissions of material, or questions related to the newsletter, to k4gg.newsletter@gmail.com.

From the President of MARCI – Dawson Blackmore, N1DXB

I've been listening on the 146.420 frequency people have been using in the area and still hear very little traffic, we need to be chatting it up a little if for no other reason to be checking on our fellow hams to see it they need anything.

My wife, Marie and I went to my Navy ship reunion, USS Sampson DDG-10, in Charleston SC and used my radio on the highway doing APRS and monitoring 146.520. I got a most APRS tracking done but it was spotty in places with no traffic on .520 all the way up and back hearing no contacts.

I hear we are still doing our nets on .820 and still have some issues in certain areas and excellent contacts in other areas. We need to continue monitoring these issues.

Hope everyone has a nice Thanksgiving and please remember everything we are blessed to have as this holiday season starts. Looking forward to everyone at our Holiday party on December 1 st at Peridia.

And don't forget that the clocks change (or may have already changed, when you read this!). We fall back an hour so things will get dark earlier. Drive carefully to the next meeting!

From the Officers and Committees

The Treasurer (Kay Torralva, KR4EUA)

The September financial report was presented at the October meeting. The club currently has 119 active members.

[***Editor's Note:*** *Kay is currently in Japan enjoying some time with family (and hams) back in the Old Country. We'll have a Treasurer Protem at the November meeting.*]

The Secretary (John Hartman, KQ4MTF)

Due to time constraints, minutes from our October general meeting are not available in this edition. We'll publish the minutes for October and November in our final, double edition of the year. We shall vote on the acceptance of the minutes at the first general meeting of 2027.

I would like to give Noah Olson (W4NKO) a special thank you, as he stood in as Secretary pro tem at the October Board of Director's meeting. Notes and votes well recorded!

Committee Reports
Repeater Trustee's Report (Ken Olson, K4KEO)

Shown here, we see Ken preparing for testing. Note the dummy loads in the right side of the picture.

This month's repeater report has evolved into it's own feature article. On October 8th, our Repeater Trustee executed detailed tests on our duplexer. As readers may recall, the K4GG repeater took a lightning strike. Other components have been identified as completely damaged. However, some hope was being held for the fate of the duplexer.

Shown here, we see Ken preparing for testing. Note the dummy loads in the right side of the picture.

Per Ken: *Peter and I tested the K4GG duplexer to determine if it had been damaged by the lightning strike that damaged the repeater, power amplifier and power supply. I used a Cushman CE-7120 Field Service Monitor in the testing. We checked the loss through both the receive and transmit cans, and found it to be within specs. We then did a desensitization check. The test failed as the signal that we injected on the receive side was completely wiped out by the transmit signal through the TX cans. That showed that the duplexer sustained some type of damage from the lightning, and is not usable.*

The Cushman CE-7120 Field Service Monitor

As Ken explains, he set up his Field Service Monitor, while Peter Jarosik (KA1WBE) provided several 2 meter rigs and accompanying hardware. Our President, Dawson Blackmore, and John Hartman provided support and did some learning as the experts got to work.

Tests included checking for degraded sensitivity, loss of signal isolation, insertion loss and unusual reflected power losses. Determining if the integrity of the cavity filters had been disrupted by internal damage, was key.

The club will be making an insurance claim regarding the equipment, and Ken will provide further updates as the process evolves.

Education and Technical Committee (Paul White, K3UWY)

Here is the remaining plan for the MARCI Technical Zoom Sessions through March 2027.

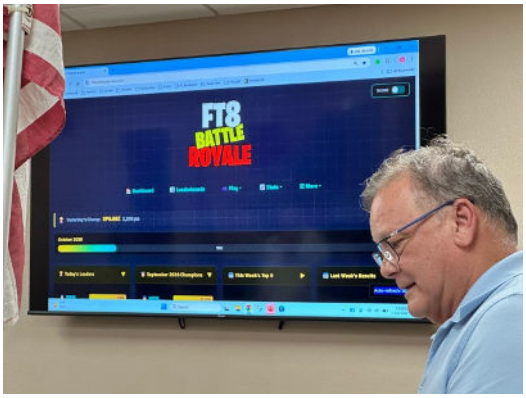
November 2026	Meshcore
December 2026	No Program
January 2026	Winlink and Varac
February 2026	Revisit Receiver Dynamic Range
March 2026	Contesting

[***Editor's Note:*** *Below is a transcription of a report Paul sent out to the club via email. Our HF Net is active! Looking forward to more folks joining.*]

Call Sign	Name	QTH	Radio	Antenna	Power	20M 10/1/26	20M 10/7/26	20M 10/14/26	20M 10/21/26	40M 10/28/26
K3UWY	Paul	Rockwall, TX	FTDX101MP	40M OCF	200W	S3-S9	S5-S9	Bust	S7-S9+	S7-S9+10
KA1WBE	Peter	Bradenton			400W	S5-S9	S5		S5-S7	
K0DRE	Dre	W. Bradenton	FT710		100W	S5-S7	S6		S4-S7	S7-S8
KO4KJD	Al	Bradenton			600W	S7-S9	S7		S9+10	
W9RAR	Rich	Parrish			100W	S3-S5	S5			
K4MNE	Mel	Sarasota		Indoor Antenna	1500W					S9+10
KD3JK	Bob	Boonsboro, MD			100W		S5			
N8RNK	Stan	Cleveland								
KR4EUA	Kay	Ellenton	FT710	Vertical	100W	S5-S7				
KR4FEE	Mark	Ellenton	IC7300	Doublet	100W		S5		S3-S7	S5
N4NTY	Ed	W. Bradenton	IC7300	EFHWF	100W	S2	S2			
KW4E	Ken	Bradenton								
K4RP	Dick	Lakewood Ranch	FTDX10	DX Commander	100W					
KQ4MTF	John	W. Bradenton	FT710	DX Commander	100W	S2-S4	S5			S7-S8
KQ4MAI	Gilbert	Ellenton		Tarheel	100W	S5-S7	S5		S3	
K2MGL	Chuck	E. Bradenton	IC718	Horiz. Loop	100W		S4			
WZ4LZ	Wade	Parrish	FT991A	EFHLW	100W					
KQ4PNZ	Sue	Bradenton			400W					
WD8JTR	Tim	W. Bradenton		EFHW	100W	S7				S7
KZ4ZZ	RB	W. Bradenton		HexBeam	100W		S8			
KX4VH	Tom	W. Bradenton	IC-7300	Fan Dipole	100W					
AE4SS	Scott	E. Bradenton	FTDX10	Gutter EFHW	100W				not heard	

News Around the Club

FT-8 Battle Royale Is all the Rage



Ray Ortgiesen (WF1B) gave the club a great presentation on ***FT8 Battle Royale***, which is a free online game and competition for ham radio operators. If you enjoy the FT8 or FT4 digital modes, this might be a way to add a new dimension to your search for QSOs.

You turn on one setting in WSJT-X, and every QSO you log automatically scores points on live leader boards - no signup required; your callsign is your player name.

Check out https://ft8battle.com/

Don’t Forget! Wednesday is IHOP Day!

Wednesdays at the IHOP on SR 64 are always...hopping! Geoff Haines (N1GY) joined the party and brought some hardware to show off.

Remember, the first Wednesday of the month is “Lady’s Lunch”. It is not required that you leave your (XYM?) in the parking lot. But you can!

Sue Rhyne (KQ4RNZ) and Peter Jarosik (KA1WBE) pose for a portrait at IHOP.

An Experiment With ChatGPT

John Hartman (KQ4MTF)

As I'm sure many of us have, I've been fiddling with AI for this and that. I've found it useful while investigating a problematic FT-450 I have on the bench. I've asked it for modeling files for various antenna ideas. It provided a lot of research results for the 33cm article we recently published. At work I'm using it daily to quickly solve the small, time consuming and expensive steps I used to do by hand.

Well, this month I thought I'd discuss an experiment in building a schedule I could keep on hand when I'm in the shack. I won't know how accurate it is until I use it, but it looks rather promising.

Every good session with AI begins with a "prompt". A well worded question will get you further along than a generic, badly considered question. I often do some research before even asking the "key question".
Here are the questions, in order, which I started throwing at ChatGPT:

- **What ham radio nets or events are occurring on October 9, 2026, on the HF bands?**
- **What ham radio nets or events are occurring on October 10, 2026, on the HF bands?**
- **What ham radio nets or events are occurring on October 11, 2026, on the HF bands?**
- **What recurring nets are occurring on October 11?**
- **Combine the contest schedule for October 11 with the recurring net schedule.**
- **Create a spreadsheet containing this information.**
- **Are there any nets or groups on HF that do slow CW or ATV?**
- **What about nets on the higher bands (20 meters and above)?**
- **Can I get a list of ham radio nets and activities for the month of November?**

As you can see, it took me awhile to start thinking big! I noticed at first that I was getting more info about 160m and 80m HF phone, than other bands and modes. So I started to focus in on the higher bands and different modes. I needed a schedule I could use all day, not just at night on a band for which I had no antenna.

I also noticed my own odd habit of thinking of "higher bands" as those bands with shorter wavelengths. Of course they're higher bands, right? Higher in the spectrum! The AI seemed to consider higher bands as those with more meters in the name. Quickly solved, as it figured out what I meant. I also noticed that each answer stayed in context, based on previous questions. Of course, this is why we refer to this set of questions as a "session". A fresh session would have its own context and accumulation of questions and answers.

As you can see from the final question, I prepared an AI generated schedule for the month of November, which I will share with the reader. Also take a look at our website, where I've placed it in Excel format. Link available in our list of URLs!

Some thoughts before presenting the results of the final question. **One**: I found much of the data to be too generic. **Two**: I found much of the data focused on only a few recurring events. **Three**: it looks as if the AI latched onto a few websites it could find and just re-organized the data it found on those sites.

In My Humble Opinion™, many more questions need to be asked of it, and more direction on how to integrate the results need to be given. If I had more time, and was making more money from the results, I'd certainly work harder to produce something better!

Here's ChatGPT's answer to the final question:

November 2026 is a **very active HF month**, especially for CW. Since you've been interested in **slow CW, SSB nets, SSTV, and higher-band activity**, I'd split the month into recurring weekly activities and

the major November contests.

Recurring HF activities throughout November

Dates in November	Time (EST)*	Bands/ Frequencies	Mode	Activity
Nov 1	evening	160–2 m	CW	Classic Exchange
Nov 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	daytime/evening	HF	CW	SKCC-related weekend activity
Nov 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	daytime	**14.300 MHz**	USB	Maritime Mobile Service Net
Daily	daytime	**14.300 MHz**	USB	Maritime Mobile Service Net
Daily	varies	**14.230 MHz**	SSTV	20-m SSTV activity
Mondays: Nov 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Sun. evening locally	160–10 m	**slow CW**	**K1USN Slow Speed Test**
Fridays: Nov 6, 13, 20, 27	afternoon	160–10 m	**slow CW**	**K1USN Slow Speed Test**
Wednesdays	various	HF	CW	CWops CWT
Wednesdays	morning	HF	CW	A1Club Weekly Test
Various	HF	CW	SKCC activities	

The K1USN Slow Speed Test is particularly worth highlighting. The November calendar currently shows nine sessions: November 2, 6, 9, 13, 16, 20, 23, 27 and 30. It's a one-hour CW activity covering 160 through 10 meters and intended for operators at 20 WPM or less. Contest Clock

One timing wrinkle: Daylight Saving Time ends November 1, so most of November you'll be on EST rather than EDT in Florida.

Major November HF weekends

November 7–8 — ARRL November Sweepstakes CW

This is one of the biggest North American CW events of the month. It starts 2100 UTC Saturday, November 7 and finishes 0259 UTC Monday, November 9. It uses 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meters. ARRL Contests

From Florida, this should produce lots of CW signals on 20 and 15 meters during daylight, with activity shifting toward 40 and 80 meters at night.

ARRL November Sweepstakes information

November 14–15 — a particularly busy weekend

Several events overlap. The Worked All Europe DX Contest — RTTY runs the full weekend on 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meters. The Japan International DX Contest — Phone runs from 0700 UTC November 14 until 1300 UTC November 15, also covering 160 through 10 meters. HamQSO

That makes this a good weekend for checking 15 and 10 meters, especially if propagation is favorable. The 10-10 International Fall Digital Contest is also listed for this weekend. HamGab

November 21–22 — ARRL November Sweepstakes Phone

This is probably the November event I'd recommend most strongly if you're looking for lots of understandable SSB activity.

It starts 2100 UTC Saturday, November 21 and ends 0259 UTC Monday, November 23, using:

160 / 80 / 40 / 20 / 15 / 10 meters — SSB

ARRL confirms those dates and bands for 2026. ARRL Contests

From Florida, I'd expect 20 meters to be one of your best daytime listening bands, with 15 and possibly 10 meters becoming interesting when propagation cooperates. At night, 40 and 80 should become much more important.

November 28–29 — CQ World Wide DX CW

This is the monster CW weekend.

The CQ World Wide DX Contest — CW runs 0000 UTC November 28 through 0000 UTC November 30, on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meters. HamQSO

If you've been practicing copying CW, this weekend is worth listening to even if contest speeds are considerably faster than you're comfortable copying. You'll hear enormous numbers of stations and get an excellent demonstration of how propagation changes across the HF spectrum during a 48-hour period.

For slow CW specifically

I'd mark these dates:

Nov 2 — K1USN SST
Nov 6 — K1USN SST
Nov 7–8 — ARRL Sweepstakes CW
Nov 9 — K1USN SST
Nov 13 — K1USN SST
Nov 16 — K1USN SST
Nov 20 — K1USN SST
Nov 23 — K1USN SST
Nov 27 — K1USN SST
Nov 28–29 — CQ WW CW
Nov 30 — K1USN SST

The contest calendar confirms those nine K1USN sessions in November. Contest Clock

For actual learning/practice, K1USN is much more suitable than Sweepstakes or CQ WW. The big contests are useful for learning to recognize callsigns, rhythm, signal characteristics and band conditions, but many competitors will be transmitting substantially faster.

Regular frequencies I'd keep programmed

For the kind of listening you've been asking about, I'd put these into receiver memories:

14.230 USB — 20-m SSTV
14.300 USB — Maritime Mobile Service Net
14.028–14.045 CW — K1USN SST region
21.028–21.045 CW — K1USN SST region on 15 m
21.340 USB — 15-m SSTV
28.028–28.045 CW — K1USN SST region on 10 m
28.680 USB — 10-m SSTV

And don't forget the Florida/regional recurring nets we identified earlier on 3.940, 3.942, 3.950, 7.242, 7.251, 7.255 and 7.258 MHz.

There are also Florida ham-radio events in November. For example, SPARCFest is November 14 in Pinellas Park, which is particularly relevant to your part of Florida, and the Flamingo Net Flea is November 21 in Coral Gables. National Amateur Radio Alliance

If you'd like, I can build a complete November 2026 HF calendar spreadsheet, similar to the October 11 spreadsheet, but with all 30 days as rows and contests + slow-CW events + recurring nets + SSTV + special-event stations, with everything converted to Florida local time (EST).

[***Editor's note:*** *In one of the previous questions, the AI provided a list of HF nets that are Florida centric. Here's the list*]

HF Nets in Florida

Frequency	Mode	Net / Activity	Typical Time
3.940 MHz	LSB	Florida Phone Traffic Net	**7:00 AM daily**
3.942 MHz	LSB	Tropical FAST Net	**6:00 PM daily**
3.950 MHz	LSB	Northern Florida Phone Net	**7:30 PM daily**
7.242 MHz	LSB	Florida Midday Traffic Net / alternate traffic frequency	Around **noon**
7.251 MHz	LSB	SouthCARS	Typically **morning–noon**
7.255 MHz	LSB	ECARS	Typically **morning–afternoon**
7.258 MHz	LSB	MidCARS	Typically **morning–early afternoon**

VE Exam Sessions

Our next VE session, which is also our final exam of the year, will be on November 21st. Note that this is the weekend before Thanksgiving.

We conduct exams on the third Saturday of every odd-numbered month, with our first exam of 2027 being on the 16th of January.

Our exam team asks that you please register in advance, as we now conduct exams electronically. This allows us time to prepare on your behalf. Please visit https://hamstudy.org/sessions/w5yi for more information.

If you wish to find our exam, or any other available exam in the area, please visit W5YI or the ARRL website.

Remember these important things to bring, on the day of your exam:

1. Your FRN Number
2. A PIN number issued per the instructions at W5YI
3. Your photo ID
4. For adults, the fee in cash, of $14 (under 18, it's free!)
5. All your knowledge! :)

Testing starts promptly at 9:00 am at:

Bible Baptist Church of Bradenton
2113 57th St E
Bradenton, FL 34208

Websites of Interest

Our MARCI website: Manatee-ARC.org

Manatee County Emergency Support Group (ARES): MCESG

Manatee County ARES Repeater Guide: MC ARES ICS 205 Blue Sky Comms Plan 18March2024

W5YI: w5yi-vec.org

HamStudy: hamstudy.org

Manatee County Public Safety: https://www.mymanatee.org/departments/public_safety

SKYWARN: https://www.weather.gov/skywarn/

How to get your FRN: https://apps.fcc.gov/cores/html/Register_New_FRN.htm

ARRL: ARRL.ORG

FT-8 Battle Royale: https://ft8battle.com/

Clubs and Other Nets

MARCI Info Net	Sunday 8:00 pm	**146.82 - 100.0 Hz**
MARCI HF Net	Thursday 7:00 pm	**TBA – Check email**
MARCI Traders Net (Bradenton)	Wednesday 8:00 pm	**146.82 - 100.0 Hz**
Gulf of America Radio Club System Fusion Net	Tuesday 7:00 pm	**441.875 + 5 MHz** **digital id 82**
MCESG ARES Net	Monday 7:00 pm	**146.82 - 100.0 Hz**
SERC Traders Net (Sarasota)	Monday 8:00 pm	**146.730 - 100.0 Hz** **145.130 - 100.0 Hz**
Manatee SKYWARN Net	Thursday 8:00 pm	**146.82 - 100.0 Hz**
WCF Eagle Net (Local NTS Net)	Nightly 8:30 pm	**145.43 - 100 Hz** **442.95 + 100 Hz**
WCF Technical Net (tech assistance)	Thursday 9:00 pm	**145.43 - 100 Hz** **442.95 + 100 Hz**

Mark Your Calendar!

The following upcoming events are noteworthy. Please mark your calendar for those items you find most important.

- The Annual Holiday Party is December 1st, at Peridia Country Club
- Our final General Meeting of 2026 is on November 3rd at the usual place. After that, Happy New Year! See you January 5th!
- Manatee County ARES/RACES meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month
- The Board of Directors of MARCI meet every third Thursday of the month
- Paul White's Technical Presentations – 8pm, every third Monday of the month. Check for email.
- The club HF net is on Thursdays at 1900 local time. Watch your email for details on frequency and scheduling.

Items for Sale

Marsha Littlefield produces fine embroidered polo shirts and other items sporting the MARCI Logo and can be reached at 941-224-0400 or via email at mympmarsha@yahoo.com. Large orders are always appreciated!

	Did you miss last year's party? Do you wish you had a way to enjoy your favorite beverage while showing everyone your support for the club? Or do you just wish you were one of the cool kids on the block? Act now on this limited time offer! Supplies of the MARCI Tumbler are low, and they're moving fast! Once they're gone, they're ***gone***. Don't be that person next year drinking from a paper cup wishing you'd bought one! Please contact Kay Torralva, our Treasurer, kaytorralva@verizon.net, for details. And remember! When you think of tumblers, think K4GG Tumblers!

Dre Schauffler (K0DRE) is placing his FT-710 AESS (and associated gear) on sale, asking $890 and including the following:

- Yaesu FT-710 (bought from HRO 11-2025) with original box and inserts.
- The original manual and mic
- power cord with Anderson power poles added
- The SP-40 external speaker (with attachment hardware)
- Prism Embroidery cover for Yaesu FT710/SP-40
- The Radio Today guide to the FT-710
- Yaesu SMB-209 Mobile Bracket
- an RT-42 (USB A to USB B) 6 Ft. Programming Cable.

From Dre: Reason for selling is my desire to purchase an Icom IC 7300 MkII radio. Radio works great and is in good condition. [***Editor's Note:*** *If you've heard Dre on the weekly HF net, that's the FT-710 at work. And it's doing great!*]

He can be reached at aschauffler@arrl.net

Philip Filosa (KQ4TPC) has a package deal for an FT5d that is for sale. For $375 this includes:

- YAESU FT5D (original box and equipment)
- YSU-SCU-57 (wires x connection cable kit)
- RAPID CHARGER
- SPARE BATTERY (2200mah)
- YAESU SSM-BT20 BLUETOOTH

From Phil: GREAT RADIO.-VERY LITTLE USE.-TOO MUCH RADIO FOR MY NEEDS.
He can be reached at **filosalaw@gmail.com**

Peter Jarosik (KA1WBE) has a variety of items which are for sale. He can be contacted at 941-580-8696.

ANRITSU Microwave Repeater Checker Model MS75B	asking $1000 obo!
Swan 10 amp power supply with a Speaker	$35.00
SEC 1223 Power Supply	$75.00
Rack Mount 70 amp Power Supply	$100.00
Drake W-4 H.F.WATT Meter	$100.00
Kenwood TM 221A 2 meter 50 Watt Radio	
MFJ-949E Antenna Tuner	$125.00
Hustler 17 meter add on Kit (new)	$100.00
TEN-TEC DESK MIC with Stand,Base and Carry case	$125.00

Ken Olson (K4KEO) and Peter Jarosik are handling an estate sale, offering these items for sale. You can reach Ken at 716-695-5235, or Pete at the number listed above.

Kenwood 570D 160-10 Meter H.F. radio	asking $600!
KENWOOD 590S 160-6 Meter H.F. Radio	$800.00
MFJ Model 4035MV Dual meter Adjustable DC Power Supply	$135.00

Things to Remember

- At every general meeting, we hold a fifty/fifty raffle as a way to amend our general fund. Please remember to bring your portraits of George Washington. One ticket is a buck, Lincoln gets you six.
- Also at our meetings, we have a “freebie” table, where members can bring items they’d like to pass along to other members.
- Every Wednesday members of the club and any other interested folks, meet for lunch at the IHOP at 6320 FL-64 East, in Bradenton. We start gathering in a reserved room starting at 11:30. And don’t forget, the first Wednesday of the month is Lady’s Day.
- The November meeting is our final meeting of the year!