

# **Alachua ARES/NFARC/NF4AC Clubs**

## **MINUTES**

**March 11, 2026**

Attendance **16**: The meeting was at the Queen of Peace Catholic Community and via ZOOM.

Gordon Gibby  
David Huckstep  
Brett Wallace  
Emily Wallace  
Jeff Capehart  
Manish Sahni  
Earl McDow  
Mark McDow  
Craig Fugate  
Angela Basham  
John Maxwell

### ***Via Zoom:***

Susan Halbert  
Mark Casey  
Brian Joy  
Mike Hasselbeck  
Earl Sloan

- Introductions.
- MINUTES FROM **FEBRUARY 2026** meeting were posted to the website.
- PREVIOUS MONTH ARES HOURS REPORT. **127.5**

### **1. HANDS ON BALUN TESTING.**

Gordon brought his Antenna Analyzer and tested the SWR on the baluns using either a 50-ohm load (for 1:1), a 450 ohm load (for 9:1), and an 1800 ohm load for 36:1. Ideally, the SWR will be 1:1 when connected to the balun with the appropriate resistor connected. The impedance needs to be down to a minimum level.

### **2. GENERAL CLASS COURSE STARTS MARCH 26, 2026.**

Brett agreed to sign up for *Propagation*. Jeff will do the *Hamtronics 1* class. Gordon plans to teach some classes at his house and other classes will be at the EOC. Classes

will start at 7pm. Duration not known since it will depend on each instructor.

**3. SENIOR CENTER EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS EXPO MARCH 12, 2026.**

Earl Sloan is coordinating. Gordon will bring some brochures.

**4. FEDERAL AND STATE SHARES.**

Gordon checked into the SHARES net on the day of the meeting at his house. Mark also assisted along with Brian. On March 25<sup>th</sup>, Brett will host our group's SHARES check-in at his house. We are having to do this because the HF antenna coax was cut at the EOC and no HF activity is possible on a weekly basis.

**5. FLORIDA POTA SATURDAY APRIL 18.**

Ron Lewis is coordinating. A signup sheet is going around. This will also be an ARRL Open House for ham radio. Earl Sloan will set up a table. However, the park requires a \$4 admission fee, so we aren't sure how many people will come visit.

**6. FLORIDA QSO PARTY EFFORT**

Our group is also setting up stations for the FL QSO Party on Saturday April 25<sup>th</sup>. That is the same day as the GARS Tailgate, so the event will start at 1pm and run to 5pm.

**7. DIGITAL CABLES**

A signup sheet was passed around for a future to-be-determined date, possibly May, for constructing cables for radios to add digital capability. We have built dozens of cables and had great success with it.

**8. DIGITAL TRIFECTA AWARD**

Discussed ideas around what digital techniques would be valuable for messaging inside Alachua County as well as outside. Suggestions were made to use existing nets like the Florida Digital net.

**9. FIELD DAY ADVANCED PLANNING**

June 27-28, 2026. Mark your calendars now! Looking at 5 stations (5F). Should be at the new EOC. Manish would like to volunteer for the GOTA station. There could be problems due to the size of the physical grounds not large enough to support a 1,000 foot circle.

**10. MOVING INTO THE NEW EOC**

Radio room will be double the size of the current radio room. Construction has been delayed and is still incomplete. Estimates are completion by April. We have been

promised a 50 foot tower. There is not enough parking for everyone who will be working at the facility.

**11. MARCH LABNLUNCH SATURDAY MARCH 28**

Signup sheets were passed around. We usually meet at Wendy's at noon. Then meet at Gordon's at 1pm. We will be building an antenna using wire and the baluns built at the prior event. You can bring your own wire or have Gordon buy you some wire at 32 cents a foot. A second group will be building WINDOW PASS THRU BOARDS using some wall pass-through boxes based on the 3D BALUN BOX design from prior event.

**12. OTHER DISCUSSION.**

Nothing mentioned.

**13. ADJOURNMENT.** At 2025 EST.

*Editor-- The secret word for this month is **DRAGONFRUIT**.*