

**Come to Our FIRST Club Meeting at 401 Pauls Drive  
Thursday June 21<sup>st</sup>**

This coming Thursday is not only the first day of summer, it is also the day of our first meeting at the new location of ARISE Assembly of God at 401 Pauls Drive in Brandon. You can view information about the location on the brandonhamradio.org website. Things get underway at 7:30 p.m. when Scott bangs the gavel to start things off.

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**Solar Energy is the Program for June**

This month's program is Solar - hey, it is June 21st, summer solstice with longest daylight, and the first day of summer! Our presentation guests will be Brenda Probasco and John Williams from BrevardSolar in St. Petersburg (<http://www.BrevardSolar.com/company>). Their specialty is clean energy for homeowners and businesses, with kitchen table understanding, real experience solution examples, and proficiency in implementation expertise. We'll delve into some brief history, the basics of how solar works, a simple Amateur's emergency setup, and what it takes to implement something larger scale. Don't miss this great opportunity to learn, understand, and gain the benefits of being *enlightened*.



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**Antenna Shootout  
Jim Moorehead WF4AC**

Do you have a favorite portable antenna? How does it stack up to someone else's? Well, Jim Smith/K4PPK and I each have one and decided have a go at it...a Texas style "shootout". May I add there were no bullets in this comparison that took place at the Valrico County Park on Miller Road between Lumsden Road and State Road 60 on May 16, 2018. No, it was just a friendly game of "mine is better than yours".

My go-to travel antenna is the Alexloop, a portable magnetic loop antenna (<http://www.alexloop.com>). Jim has a brand new Wolf River Coil Silver Bullet Mini (<http://www.wolfrivercoils.com/products.html>). Two totally different products but with one thing in common: easily packed/transported and easy to use. We decided to make a morning of it communicating on FT8, WSPR and SSB phone using our Yaesu FT-817, QRP rigs. This was not an acid highly technical test, but rather a general comparison of physical and receipt/transmission properties. We both like the 817 and when powered by a small Lithium battery can produce 5 watts of power. So, starting at 9 AM, with technical observers Dick Capell/KJ6FNV and Dana Perrin/KM4DTJ, we found a shade tree and set up antennas, radios, portable table and chairs.



Setup. The Loop (or as PPK calls it, the “donut”) comes in a slim canvas zipper bag and is easily put together without tools. The Wolf is also easy to put together, again without tools, however no bag or carrying case is provided. The biggest difference in setup is there are no radials with the Loop. The Wolf comes with three 33 ft. wires that are easily attached to a small aluminum/SS tripod. Uncoiling and placing these wires takes more time than the Loop. The Loop was set on a small carbon fiber tripod. We connected our radios and attached our Signalink external sound cards to small laptop computers and set about to tune.

Tuning. Since we were going to use FT8 first on 20 meters, that was the frequency tuned. The Loop requires the user to turn a built-in capacitor knob on the antenna itself and listen for high noise or low values on the radio’s SWR meter. The Wolf requires adjusting the coil ring to the proper band and adjusting for the frequency as necessary with an antenna tuner or the radio’s SWR meter. The Loop is a tad faster to tune to a single frequency, but later when roaming the band one must continuously tune since it is a very high Q receiver. The Wolf has a much wider span of low SWR reception. Okay, so we’re tuned and ready to start.



FT8. We both took a few minutes to make sure our computer clocks were set to within a second or two of our cell phone clocks as transmission and reception relies on somewhat precise timing. No internet was available at the park. When complete, we started to see the spectrum waterfall on 20 meters and within 5 minutes we were both making and logging contacts. Not much difference in antennas. On to the next activity.

WSPR. You don’t really “talk” to other hams, rather record (received and transmitted) signals. Go to [WSPRnet.org](http://wsprnet.org) to see your contacts (<http://wsprnet.org/drupal/wsprnet/map>) by entering the band and your call-sign, then click “update”. The web site will display a world map and your received and transmitted signals by call-sign and location. We transmitted at different times so as not to interfere with each other and both received signals from at least 20 different stations transmitting WSPR signals. We had to wait until returning home to see who received our signals. The Wolf was a much better transmitter covering the entire U.S. and even got a hit from Japan. The Loop only recorded the eastern half if the country. But what about phone.

SSB. Okay, we are QRP at 5 watts. **We should be doing CW especially during a solar minimum.** But hey, lets see if we can hear and transmit SSB on phone. The Loop was able to reduce background noise better than the Wolf, but that is expected given the directivity (you can rotate the loop) and high Q characteristics. In addition, I had a BHI noise reduction module (<https://www.bhi-ltd.com/noise-cancelling/amateur-radio-dsp-installs/nedsp1061-kbd-yaesu-ft817-install.html>) installed that virtually eliminated any background signals. We didn't make any contacts, however, a passerby was extremely interested in what we were doing. He is an electrical engineer so was intrigued by the digital activity. Dana handed him a club brochure on the spot.

Summary.

1. Both antennas easily receive signals with the Loop less noisy.
2. The Wolf was easily the better transmitter in an open field as seen in Jim's map results.
3. The Loop needs to be tuned almost constantly as it is sweeping the bands.
4. The Loop can be setup or moved easily anywhere or even hand carried while in use. The Wolf is more of a stay-in-one-place antenna.
5. The Wolf requires radials that may not be suitable in relation to other people in the same area – think beach or high activity park. The Loop can even be brought on board a boat/ship.
6. The Loop is way more expensive than the Wolf. The new version (mine is almost 4 years old) is about \$360. The Wolf Mini is about \$100.

Have you heard the Brit phrase “horses for courses”? Well, that’s what we have. I got the Loop to use near the water or on a butte and near others with no place for radials. Jim’s Wolf is ideally suited for open spaces and little traffic. Fitted with white wire radials would make it safer. The price can really be a game changer, no doubt. I’ll certainly keep my Loop but consider the Wolf as a relatively inexpensive easily backpacked option.



**Wolf Antenna**

Bottom Line. It wasn't just the antennas that made it fun, it was getting together with fellow hams and visitors on a cloudless morning. I couldn't make the last outing, but sure do plan on trying to think up more ways to learn and experiment with ham radio. Help me out...suggest some new activities away from the shack. This is WF4AC listening...

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## **Hillsborough County 2018 Mass Casualty Exercise**

Thanks to Bernie Huth W4BGH for the Exercise information

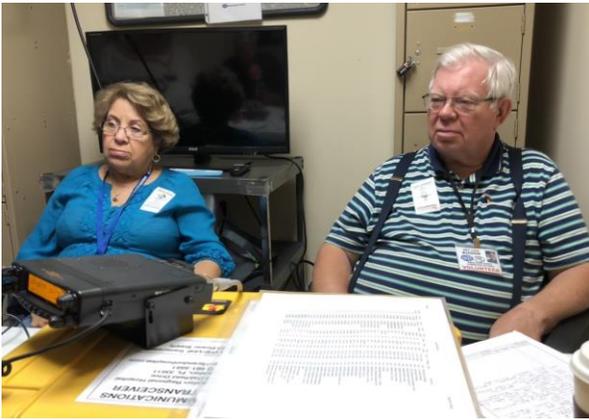
The Hillsborough County Mass Casualty Exercise took place on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June, 2018. The scenario centered around an aircraft accident at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa. The Hillsborough County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated along with the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)/Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) at the Public Safety Operations Complex (PSOC). Brandon Amateur Radio Society (BARS) members participated with the Brandon Regional Hospital staff during the exercise in a continuing effort to show that we support the relationship and to provide training to new BARS volunteers. Since the Plant City Emergency Room did not participate, no BARS members deployed to that site. Pictured here is WF4AC operating at Brandon Regional Hospital.



On the morning of the exercise BARS volunteers arrived at Brandon Regional Hospital between 07:30 and 07:45 , tested the antenna SWR, set up the FT8800 VHF/UHF transceiver, and were prepared for operations by 08:00. Radios were set to 446.00 MHz for BARS intra-hospital communication. BARS members participating were:

Bernie Huth/W4BGH  
Jim Moorehead/WF4AC  
Skip Argoe/KD4IOF  
Art Lusk/KI4SGM  
Dana Perrin/KM4DTJ

Ron Perrett/K4FZU  
Randy Lee/KN4ROC  
Angie Vazquez/KI4RUC  
Jerry Brewer/WC4JB



**Angie KI4RUC and Art KI4SGM**

New volunteers visited the Hospital Incident Command Center and were met the Incident Commander for the hospital, Peter Hempstead along with the Director of security and Safety Services: Richard Walker.

The ARES/RACES net started operations at 09:05 on the 147.106 repeater and Net Control declared the exercise underway. No other frequencies or subnets were used or activated during the exercise. The BARS radio operator checked into the net along with two other hospitals: Tampa General Hospital and South Bay Hospital. The exercise wrapped up at 10:55 that morning.

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That's it for this month. Have fun with radio!

### **Keep in Mind Our Weekly Nets and Bulletins**

**Monday 8 p.m. The Two Meter Net 147.765 - 147.165 MHz Hosted by Doris Haskell WB9VDT**

**Tuesday 7 p.m. 6-meter Roundtable 50.200 MHz USB followed at 8 p.m. with the 10 Meter Roundtable 28.365 MHz USB**

**Send us your articles AND PICTURES! We do much more in the digital format! I would like to have pictures of BARS members and their ham shacks!**

**Remember to check out the BARS website:**

**[brandonhamradio.org](http://brandonhamradio.org)**