

MERT

Marion County Emergency Radio Team



Marion County Sheriff's Office
Div. of Emergency Management

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

May 2022

MERT's primary role is to support all open Evacuation Shelters throughout Marion County during declared Emergency events. We also support EOC and emergency personnel along with Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) with voice, image and data communications resources. "Call MERT.... When all else fails!"

Mark your calendars!

MERT Monthly Meeting

The May Meeting will be
May 21st @ 10:00 am at the
MCSO EOC (692 NW 30th
Ave, Ocala, FL 34475).

See you there!

Monthly Meeting Update

MERT's April Monthly meeting was cancelled so all could enjoy the Easter weekend events and activities with family and friends. See you in May!

SHREK Kit Review



MERT Training Manager Bill Sobel, K1WLS



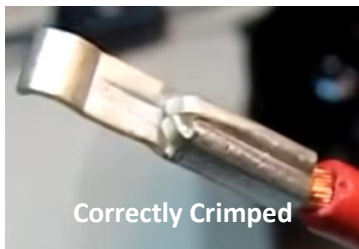
Kraig Pritts, KA2LHO &
Gray Moffett, KC3DWY

On April 13th, MERT Training Manager Bill Sobel led us in completing an audit of all 14 SHREK Kits (Shelter Radio Emergency Kits). The action was directed towards confirming all hardware and materials were available and in good working order in preparation for the 2022 Hurricane season. Our next training event will include operating all the radios in verifying correct programming and transmit/receive functions.

"The broadest, and maybe the most meaningful definition of volunteering:
Doing more than you have to because you want to, in a cause you consider good." ~Ivan Scheier



Incorrectly Crimped



Correctly Crimped

SPECIAL NOTICE: POWER SUPPLY CONNECTOR CONCERNS

Some Members reported the Anderson Powerpole connectors being loose or actually coming out of the crimp connectors.

It was determined that some connections were not crimped correctly which allowed the wires to easily pull out of the connector. At the next SHREK test event, all power supply connections will be closely inspected and all loose/incorrectly crimped connectors will be replaced.

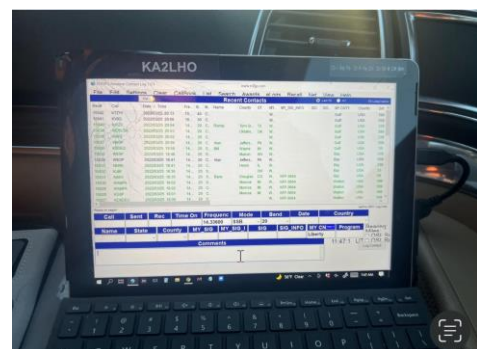
MERT Member On the Road (Again!)

MERT member Kraig Pritts, KA2LHO, recently put his ham radio skills to a three-day endurance test by activating, while mobile, from every county in the Florida panhandle, along with additional areas east of the panhandle area and one county in southwest Alabama. During that time, he also operated from six Florida State Parks.

While his wife drives, Kraig uses both SSB and CW on 20, 30 and 40 meters to operate while mobile in the counties and stationary in the State Parks. This team has operated from every county in Florida-multiple times over the years.



Kraig Pritts, KA2LHO



One amazing factoid is they have operated from 113 Florida State Parks and even more outside of Florida!

During this recent 1,000+ mile trip, they made more than 200 contacts over three days with operators in 30 states and multiple foreign countries including Azores, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy and Portugal.



For the most part they were on the road for 9+ hours each day with a large percentage of that time being on the air with other operators.

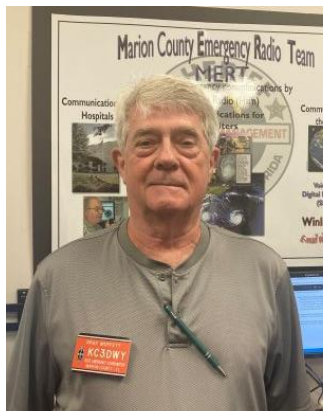
Kraig says that operations under long and sometimes challenging conditions (sending morse code on a hurricane damaged roadway is “interesting!”) is good preparation for emergency response situations based on personal experience as a medic, firefighter and 911 dispatcher. He feels that these mobile operations benefit his participation in MERT.



Kraig and his wife are already planning another radio road trip to the south Gulf Coast of Florida in a few weeks to put additional counties and Florida State Parks on the air.

Kraig, thank you for sharing your amazing journey with us. Safe travels!

New MERT Secretary



**Gray Moffett, KC3DWY
MERT Secretary**

MERT Member Gray Moffett, KC3DWY, has volunteered to become our Secretary. In his new role, Gray will be announcing, documenting and reporting the events and activities conducted during official meetings of MERT.

We want to also acknowledge Gray's participation in the monthly Region 3/5 Florida EOC Net and his mastery of Winlink P2P comms!

Gray, Thank You for stepping up and supporting MERT by accepting this responsibility.

ARRL Update

Harlan Cook (KN4VRM) shares he is updating the ARRL on our status.



- ✓ A copy of our 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes was forwarded which is required to continue our "Active" status as an Affiliated Club.
- ✓ The club information is being updated to reflect our current membership, all group leaders and the organizational activities going forward.

The updates will be posted after the ARRL approves the submissions.

Mobile Command Center (MCC) Update

MERT members have continued our discussions and analysis on the best methods of supporting the future MCC.

As we dig deeper into our roles and responsibilities backing up the MCSO Division of Emergency Management operations, we have concluded that a mobile radio “Go Kit” concept is best.

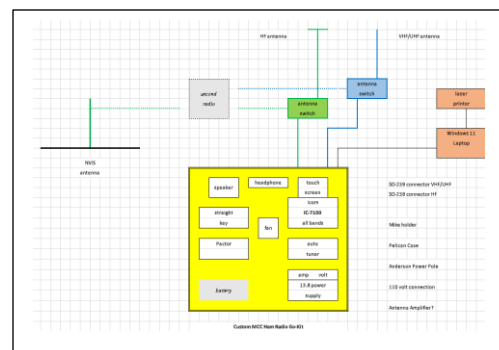


Proposed MCSO type of new Mobile Command Center.



Just as our SHREK Kits offer MERT personnel the greatest flexibility and mobility for use at the Shelters, members agree our Mission is best met with designing a fully functioning all-band radio Go Kit which can support the MCC along with Points of Distributions (POD's), Emergency Comm's from remote County sites, etc. outside of the MCC activation.

Member Bruce Twiss, KI4NFA, has crafted an excellent design outline which captures the current concept. Copies are available from Bruce (brucetwiss@yahoo.com) or Harlan Cook (harlancook6@gmail.com).



Sheriff's Appreciation Dinner



MERT attendees Clint Stockton and Harlan Cook



North Marion High School Jazz Band



Sheriff Billy Woods

MERT participants enjoyed a wonderful evening with great food, MCSO Volunteer recognitions and entertainment by the North Marion High School Jazz Band. Attending the 2022 Sheriff's Dinner was Member and Trustee Clint Stockton, AG0K, Member Carl Berry, KC5CMX, and Harlan Cook, KN4VRM, MERT Coordinator. Sheriff Billy Woods stopped by and said.... "Hello and Thanks to MERT!"

Hospital Emergency Communications Team (HEC) Visit

On April 8th, Harlan Cook, KN4VRM attended the Monthly Meeting of the Hospital Emergency Communications Team (HEC) hosted by Dave Welker, W2SRP, HEC Coordinator. Harlan shared he appreciated the invitation and enjoyed the opportunity of participating. He also shared MERT is looking forward to working together on joint exercises in the future.



HEC Members showing personal Radio Go Kit's



Dave Welker, HEC Coordinator at the April Meeting



HEC Radio Facility at AdventHealth Ocala



Dave Welker, W2SRP, HEC Coordinator with Harlan Cook, KN4VRM, MERT Coordinator

Join the MERT NET

Each Thursday @ 19:30 Local, the MERT D-STAR Net will be on KK4DFC, Frequency 146.790 MHz, followed by D-Rats check ins, followed by a discussion of the Winlink Training Messages received. Want to learn Winlink? Contact MERT for assistance.

Following the MERT Net each Thursday @ 20:00 Local, a MERT/CERT KJ4CLL NET is conducted on Frequency 145.330 MHz. ALL Marion County MERT/CERT/HEC Hams are invited!

Thank You for Your Service

Member Harold Ellis, N4HOE, has resigned from MERT effective April 22nd. We sincerely thank Harold for his many years of service to MERT, MCSO Division of Emergency Management and the citizens of Marion County.

Thank you, Mr. Ellis, for your service!

Invitation to Attend

MERT meetings are open to all interested Amateur radio enthusiast, CERT, ARES, Skywarn members and the General Public who are interested in learning more about participating in this important volunteer Amateur radio organization.

[Interested in learning more about MERT..... Visit https://kg4nxo.com/](https://kg4nxo.com/)