

# MERT

Marion County Emergency Radio Team



Marion County Sheriff's Office  
Div. of Emergency Management

## COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

August 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 August Meeting will be August 20th @ 10:00 am at the MCSO EOC (692 NW 30th Ave, Ocala, FL 34475).

See you there!

### **MERT Wednesday Check-In's**

As more Members are participating in the Wednesday Morning "Check-In's" (0900 to 1200 Hrs.), here's a summary on the many topics and activities last month.

- ✓ ID's placed on the new batteries in the garage and were set up for maintenance charge.
- ✓ New keys to be made for the garage door.
- ✓ Time spent with questions and answers from the staff concerning antenna and placement positioning when room for such is scant.
- ✓ Time spent with staff explaining some of the functions of the antennas right outside the MERT door.
- ✓ The MERT inhouse database was explained.
- ✓ Time spent with staff at the repeater 'hut' where all the devices therein were explained.

**Special recognition to Leon Jurcyszyn, K8ZAG (MERT Technical Advisor) and Gray Moffett, KC3DWY (MERT Secretary) who contributed many, many hours of work on the following actions:**

- ✓ 6 new computers (All-in-One types) were installed replacing older PC's. Two additional units will be replaced when the next PC shipment is received.

"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

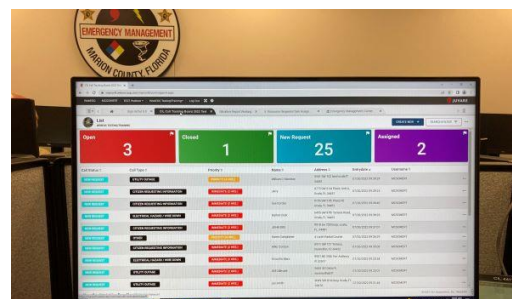
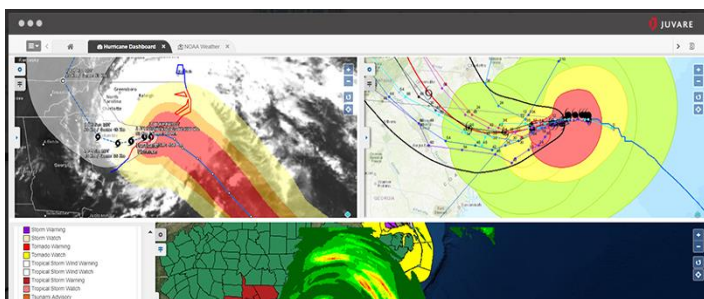
- ✓ New hardware was required for two installations.
- ✓ Many software programs unique to MERT's operations were required to be loaded on the computers to replicate their intended station function.
- ✓ Batteries were replaced in all wireless mice and keyboards.
- ✓ The room was thoroughly cleaned of all the dust, cups, misc. outdated paper material, etc.
- ✓ The carpeting was thoroughly vacuumed.



A huge **Thank You** to Leon Jurczyn, Technical Advisor and Gray Moffett, Secretary for their many, many hours of work to replace computers, reload and test vital MERT software, replace batteries in all keyboards and mice....then thoroughly cleaning the radio room!

## **WebEOC Training**

The WebEOC training was excellent! WebEOC is a computer program designed for Emergency Management organizations to enhance data sharing and common workflows among multiple internal and external organizations (public and private sectors) supporting faster response and recovery efforts. MERT is required to use this Emergency Management program so schedule your class ASAP. WebEOC training is a critical skill!



**Congratulations to the following WebEOC training participants: Bill Gillespie, Bill Cummings, Paul Blystone, Gray Moffett, Gerry Mucci, Gary Neron, Bob Gordon, Mike Condon, Clint Stockton, Harlan Cook and Hayden Kaufman.**

## New Member Update

MERT welcomes Gary Neron. Gary is joining MERT as he is interested in learning about the amateur radio hobby (he is studying for his technician license) and supporting our Mission helping the Division of Emergency Management in times of emergencies.

***Welcome Gary!***



**Assistant Coordinator Bill Gillespie (KW5BG) helps new member Gary Neron with programming his radio.**



**MERT's Icom IC-718  
HF Transceiver**

## IC-718 MARS Mod

When you see the Icom IC-718 missing in the MERT EOC room, don't panic..... it's been sent it in for a "MARS modification". This upgrade makes the radio compatible for use for SHARES communications and also provides MERT a backup transceiver to the IC-7100 which was modified in June.

## More on SHARES

MERT applied and was recently granted SHARES approval by the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (Dept. of Homeland Security - DHS). The SHARed RESources (SHARES) High Frequency (HF) Radio program provides an additional means for organizations with a national security and emergency preparedness mission to communicate when landline, cellular and Internet communications are unavailable. SHARES members use HF radio resources to coordinate and transmit messages needed to perform critical functions, including those areas related to leadership, safety, maintenance of law and order, emergency management, finance, and public health.



**One important note to remember...** The SHARES program is administered by DHS and uses frequencies outside of those available for amateur use by the Federal Communications Commission. From past experiences, this may be critical during emergency operations as HF frequencies allocated to amateur radio use can become congested and unavailable for critical messages between Emergency Management

organizations. Just as MERT is a critical resource “when all else fails” for the Division of Emergency Management.... SHARES access provides MERT another option.... when airwaves may be overloaded... to get critical information to regional, state and national agencies.

MERT will be using SHARES as part of the Florida Region 3 & 5 Monthly NET. Shares training is planned in the future as we become more familiar with the procedures, regular training NET’s and our growing experience with its operation.

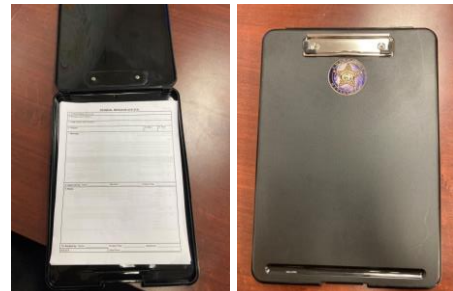
**[Note: It is vitally important** that all MERT Members learn and participate in the monthly Region 3 & 5 training NET to become familiar with the specific tests and actions required in supporting an emergency activation. **Every MERT Member** must be knowledgeable of the systems and processes to be prepared in fulfilling our Mission...

If you are not familiar with this NET, please plan on participating to become fully capable to perform all actions supporting our duties at the EOC.]

### **New MERT Clipboards**

MERT has been gifted 10 new Storage Clipboards supporting our operations in allowing Members to have access to important information and forms during exercises and actual activations.

Resources will include Contact lists and multiple ICS forms (205’s, 213’s, 214’s) and other reference materials.



MERT sincerely Thanks the donor for their gift!

### **Administrative Activities Update**

To keep Members aware of the day-to-day activities performed by the MERT Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator, the following update is shared.

Regularly during the month, we receive email or phone communications on questions, requests for assistance and sharing new licensed HAM information. The following email was sent after receiving an update on a new HAM licensee we received. Enjoy!

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From: KG4NXO  
Date: 8:10 AM  
To: kfr2021@outlook.com, Bill, Wayne

Mr. Kevin Frisina, KQ4CBP:

Good morning.

We have been contacted by Wayne Wilbright, WD5LA, Outreach Coordinator of the Anchorage ARC VEC sharing your success getting your license. As fellow HAM's, we congratulate you on your new license!

Amateur radio is a fun and extremely interesting hobby which has many paths to learn more about the fascinating technology while enjoying talking with other HAMs via the airwaves.

As you begin learning more about HAM radio, questions will likely arise on various aspects from purchasing a radio, adding an antenna to troubleshooting items which will likely arise at some point. When this happens, be aware the Marion County Emergency Radio Team (MERT) can be a great resource to help you as we have many very knowledgeable veterans who love the hobby....and love helping other HAM's.

I've attached a brief document we produced about MERT and one of several aspects of our assignment by the Sheriff's Office...supporting School Shelters when they are opened during emergencies (hurricanes).

Should you ever have a question or want to speak with some experienced HAM's, we invite you to drop an email to this address...or, personally visit with us at the Marion County Emergency Operations Center and 698 NW 30th Ave. (In the Emergency Management Building.) We meet informally every Wednesday morning from 8 - 11 am and have our Monthly Meetings on the third Saturday each month at the same facility. I've also included my mobile number to call anytime.

Again, Congratulations and welcome to Amateur Radio!

Best regards.....and 73's.

Harlan Cook  
MERT Coordinator

### **Mobile Command Center (MCC) Update**

MERT members presented Preston Bowlin details of their recommendations on the "Go Kit" resource for the new MCC due in 2023.

Special thanks all Member contributions with special



thanks to Bruce Twiss (KI4NFA) for his documentation and work crafting drawings and connection diagrams. Additional thanks to Bill Gillespie (KW5BG), Leon Jurczyn (K8ZAG) and Harlan Cook (KN4VRM) for their research and reviews efforts on the several designs and vendor resources available.

**Example of proposed Mobile Command Center (MCC) on order for the Division of Emergency Management.**



### **A Special Thanks to Leon Jurczyn**

Harlan Cook, MERT Coordinator wants to acknowledge Leon Jurczyn, Past MERT Coordinator and current Technical Advisor for leading MERT while he and Bill Gillespie were out of state. ***Thank you, Leon, for your leadership and support of MERT!***

### **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/)**