

## Orlando HamCation 2014

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**It was another great year in Orlando during this bitter cold winter.** Pictured above, my XYL Helen, ACØNF with a friend Rochelle, KCØYWH from Radio Wavz Antennas. We could drop off things for storage in their booth as we collected stuff. Rochelle and her husband Emmett, WØQH are from our home area and are good friends. We also met Jim Fenstermaker, K9JF, 2nd Vice President, ARRL. Jim will be coming to our area in St. Louis in the near future. We also had lunch with Ed, K8DSS and attended a couple of great forums. The weather was lousy by Florida standards, but it was great by ours. It rained but it was about 35 degrees **above freezing.** 73, Rick

**The GM Nets meet daily Monday through Saturday on 7.277.5 MHz at 18:00Z and Tuesdays on 14.277 +/- QRM at 16:15Z**

Would you like to help out  
with Net Control Duties?  
Contact our Net Manager  
George, KB9VF  
kb9vf@Comcast.net

## Net Preamble & Closing



### Net Control Stations:

George, KB9VF  
Rick, WØPC  
Verle, K8VW  
Bill, WB9YUR  
Denny, N8XLS  
Bill, WD9AIH  
Phil, W9MPA  
Bob, K8MPV  
George, N8NPW  
David, ABØHU  
Charlie, WD9IQV  
Fred, WD8ADG  
Chuck, WA8IHI  
Wally, WB8M  
Walter, DF4IZ  
Ed, K8DSS (Alternate)

### Net Preamble

This is ( your call ), today's net control. This net is composed of employees and retirees of the General Motors Corporation .

This net meets daily on this frequency for the purpose of getting better acquainted, expanding our knowledge, and improving our operating techniques. We promote friendship among participants in many locations who have many talents and have or have had a variety of work assignments. The General Motors nets are international in scope on some bands, and visitors are always welcome to check in. Please stay carefully tuned to net control at all times. This is ( your call ) ( working for or retired from ) ( your ) Division in ( your city ), ( state ). My home QTH is ( where you live ). My name is ( your name ) and we will now take check-ins, one at a time, please.

When running the net, pause after about 4 to 5 station during the roundtable and ask for check-ins to allow folks to get on the list.

### Net Closing

Are there any late check-ins for the net? (pause for late check-ins). Is there any further business for the net? ( pause for any further business ) Having no further business, we will close the net at this time. This net is composed of General Motors employees, retirees, and visitors. We meet each day, Monday through Saturday, on or about this frequency, at ( 1700z or **1800z** ). Thank you for your participation and please return often. This is ( your call ) now closing the net. 73 and Good Afternoon.

**Turn on the radio and tune us in. We are on 40-meters  
Join us on or about 7.277.5 MHz at 18:00Z**

# Net Control Schedule

March 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Notes: DX Net, 1615Z, 14.277 +/- QRM: Walter, DF4IZ Net Control						1 ABØHU - David
2	3 WD9IQV - Charlie	4 WD8ADG - Fred, DF4IZ - Walter	5 WA8IHI - Chuck	6 WØPC- Rick	7 KB9VF - Geo	8 WD9AIH - Bill
9	10 K8MPV - Bob	11 K8VW - Verle, DF4IZ - Walter	12 WB9YUR - Bill	13 N8NPW - Geo	14 W9PMA - Phil	15 N8XLS - Denny
16	17 ABØHU - David	18 WD9IQV - Charlie, DF4IZ - Walter	19 WD8ADG - Fred	20 WA8IHI - Chuck	21 WØPC- Rick	22 KB9VF - Geo
23	24 WD9AIH - Bill	25 K8MPV - Bob, DF4IZ - Walter	26 K8VW - Verle	27 WB9YUR - Bill	28 N8NPW - Geo	29 W9PMA - Phil
30	31 N8XLS - Denny					

**Where did you want  
us to drop off this  
new Kenwood  
TS-990?**



# FreeDV - Digital Voice on HF

Have you heard of Digital Voice on the HF ham bands? If you listen around 14.236 MHz on Sunday afternoons, you probably have heard it and not known what that noise was. The signals are narrower than SSB and reproduce voice without any background noise, like your 2-meter FM rig. Mel Whitten, KØPFX is one of the developers of this new mode. He is one of the top digital guys in the country. Mel lives in the St. Louis area and is a good friend. He was the guy that got me going with Packet radio way back, then on to PSK-31 many years later but still long before soundcard modes were popular. Mel likes to stay on the cutting edge of technology and keeps his ham shack equipped with the best. I like it when Mel buys a new rig...cuz I get a chance to buy his old stuff and his old stuff is nice.

Getting back to digital voice, the software is free. Just download it from <http://freedv.org/tiki-index.php>. The software uses your computer's soundcard to code and decode the zeros and ones into voice and back. The software runs on Windows, Mac OS, Linux and more operating systems. The web site has some demos that you can watch to learn about how to setup your system. One of the instructions say that you need 2 soundcards to make it work. I only have one and use a USB headset for the 2nd one. Your computer's soundcard talks to your radio and your USB headset talks to your computer. It's really pretty easy to setup. I sort of fumbled my way through the setup and put my rig in transmit and called TEST TEST and K5WH in Houston, TX came back to me. I was running 30 watts into my dipole antenna. Boy, was I surprised. As easy as this mode is to setup and the fact that it's free makes the transition to digital simple. Most of us have modes like PSK-31 setup on our radios. Just add a USB headset to that, and you're ready to launch to the next new frontier.

I don't think there will be the fight like the transition from AM to SSB. You don't need to buy a new radio to make it work. A great feature with FreeDV is the fact there is no QRM from adjacent frequencies and it doesn't take up as much bandwidth as SSB. The heart of making digital voice work is the audio codec (code/decode). The original attempt for digital voice used a commercially produced codec. It worked well, but the developers threatened to sue for infringement on their patent rights. Fortunately, there was a ham way down under in Australia, David Rowe, who wrote an audio codec he named Codec2 as part of his research while working on his PHD degree. The guys here in the states convinced him to do a little more development on it and make it available for free ham use.

I had the pleasure of being introduced to this new voice mode when we were out on the west coast last October at the Pacificon Hamfest. One of Mel's friends and joint developer Bruce Perens put on the forum to a packed house. Mel also had a setup at his booth there too. He was using his Flex 5000A software connected remotely to Gerry, N4DV's Flex 5000A station in Florida. We were actually transmitting from Florida sort of like what I do with my remote hookup when we are traveling. I was talking via digital voice at the hamfest to another ham in Tennessee without any noise. The hamfest was noisy but no background noise came thru. The only difficult part was on my end hearing thru the noisy crowd. That was my first live QSO using FreeDV. Later in October, Helen and I went to the ARRL Midwest Division Hamfest where Mel setup shop showing off FreeDV. He also put on a digital voice forum there too. Fast forwarding to Orlando in February, Mel did it again. This time with a little practice behind him, Mel put on a great forum. He told me afterwards that he is also doing a forum at Dayton and also at the ARRL's National Centennial Hamfest in Hartford, CT in July. The show is going big time.

There is another web site called "FreeDV QSO Finder, <http://qso.k7ve.org/>. You can login and put your frequency and see who else is on and what frequency they are tuned to. All the regular frequencies are listed there that cover all the popular ham bands. By rule, digital voice must be done on the phone bands. The main watering hole for FreeDV is 20-meters on 14.236 MHz. Give it a try. 73, Rick (WØPC)



# Net Control Schedule

April 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Notes:		1 ABØHU - David, DF4IZ - Walter	2 WD9IQV - Charlie	3 WD8ADG - Fred	4 WA8IHI - Chuck	5 WØPC- Rick
6	7 KB9VF - Geo	8 WD9AIH - Bill, DF4IZ - Walter	9 K8MPV - Bob	10 K8VW - Verle	11 WB9YUR - Bill	12 N8NPW - Geo
13	14 W9PMA - Phil	15 N8XLS - Denny, DF4IZ - Walter	16 ABØHU - David	17 WD8ADG - Fred	18 WD9IQV - Charlie	19 WA8IHI - Chuck
20	21 WØPC- Rick	22 KB9VF - Geo, DF4IZ - Walter	23 WD9AIH - Bill	24 K8MPV - Bob	25 K8VW - Verle	26 WB9YUR - Bill
27	28 N8NPW - Geo	29 W9PMA - Phil, DF4IZ - Walter	30 N8XLS - Denny	Notes:  <b style="text-align: center;">DX Net, 1615Z, 14.277 +/- QRM:</b>		

### Bob & Carmen Hall, N8AOF

The band weather through Atlanta and the east coast allowed us to stay in Florida another day. Since we had an extra day we got a chance to pay a visit with Bob & Carmen in Summerfield. Maybe you have seen advertisements for "The Villages" in Florida. That's the place where you see the fancy golf carts that have their own lanes on the roads. It's a very nice community. We went there for lunch at a nice place overlooking the lake. The temperature was warm enough for us to sit outside and talk about all those poor folks stuck inside during the blizzard up north. 73, Rick



**Bob - N8AOF**



## Stretching Your Hard Earned Dollar

**DISCOUNTS FOR SENIORS – YOU MUST ASK FOR YOUR DISCOUNT: NO ASK, NO DISCOUNT!!!**

### **RESTAURANTS**

Applebee's: 15% off (60+)  
 Arby's: 10% off (55+)  
 Ben & Jerry's: 10% off (60+)  
 Bennigan's: discount varies by location (60+)  
 Bob's Big Boy: discount varies by location (60+)  
 Boston Market: 10% off (65+)  
 Burger King: 10% off (60+)  
 Chick-Fil-A: 10% off or free small drink or coffee (55+)  
 Chili's: 10% off (55+)  
 CiCi's Pizza: 10% off (60+)  
 Denny's: 10% off, 20% off for AARP mem. (55+)  
 Dunkin' Donuts: 10% off or free coffee (55+)  
 Einstein's Bagels™: 10% off baker's dozen of bagels (60+)  
 Fuddrucker's: 10% off any senior platter (55+)  
 Gatti's Pizza: 10% off (60+)  
 Golden Corral: 10% off (60+)  
 Hardee's \$0.33 beverages everyday (65+)  
 IHOP: 10% off (55+)  
 Jack in the Box – up to 20% off (55+)  
 KFC: Free small drink with any meal (55+)  
 Krispy Kreme: 10% off (50+)  
 Long John Silver's: various discounts (55+)  
 McDonald's: Discounts on coffee everyday (55+)  
 Mrs. Fields: 10% off at participating loc. (60+)  
 Shoney's: 10% off  
 Sonic: 10% off or free beverage (60+)  
 Steak 'n Shake: 10% off every Mon. & Tues. (50+)  
 Subway: 10% off (60+)  
 Sweet Tomatoes: 10% off (62+)  
 Taco Bell: 5% off, free beverages for seniors (65+)  
 TCBY: 10% off (55+)  
 Tea Room Café: 10% off (50+)  
 Village Inn: 10% off (60+)  
 Waffle House: 10% off every Monday (60+)  
 Wendy's: 10% off (55+)  
 Whataburger: 10% off (62+)  
 White Castle: 10% off (62+)

### **RETAIL & APPAREL**

Banana Republic: 30% off (50+)  
 Bealls: 20% off first Tues. of mo (50+)  
 Belk's: 15% off first Tues. of mo (55+)  
 Big Lots: 30% off  
 Bon-Ton Dept. Stores: 15% off senior discount days (55+)  
 C.J. Banks: 10% off every Wed. (50+)  
 Clarks: 10% off (62+)  
 Dress Barn: 20% off (55+)  
 Goodwill: 10% off 1-day-a-week \*  
 Hallmark: 10% off 1-day-a-week \*  
 K-Mart: 40% off (Wed. only) (50+)  
 Kohl's: 15% off (60+)  
 Rite Aid: 10% off on Tues.; 10% on prescp.  
 Ross Stores: 10% off every Tuesday (55+)  
 Salvation Army Thrift Stores: up to 50% (55+)  
 Stein Mart: 20% off red dot/clearance items first Monday of every month (55+)

### **GROCERY**

Albertson's: 10% off first Wed. of mo. (55+)  
 American Discount: 10% off every Mon. (50+)  
 Compare Foods Supermarket: 10% every Wed. (60+)  
 DeCicco Family Markets: 5% off every Wed. (60+)  
 Food Lion: 0% off every Monday (60+)  
 Fry's Supermarket: Free VIP club membership and 10% off every Monday (55+)  
 Great Value Food Store: 5% off every Tues. (60+)  
 Gristedes Supermarket: 5% off every Tues. (60+)  
 Harris Teeter: 5% off every Tuesday (60+)  
 Hy-Vee: 5% off one day a week  
 Kroger: 10% off (date varies by location)  
 Morton Williams Supermarket: 5% off every Tues. (60+)  
 The Plant Shed: 10% off every Tuesday (50+)  
 Publix: 15% off every Wednesday (55+)  
 Rogers Marketplace: 5% off every Thursday (60+)  
 Uncle Giuseppe's marketplace: 15% off (62+)

**Discount information was taken from the St. Louis GM Salaried Retiree's Club newsletter February 2014. It's a great way to stretch our shrinking dollar.**

# Net Control Schedule

March 2014

## May 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Notes: DX Net, 1615Z, 14.277 +/- QRM: Walter, DF4IZ Net Control				1 ABØHU - David	2 WD9IQV - Charlie	3 WD8ADG - Fred
4	5 WA8IHI - Chuck	6 WØPC- Rick, DF4IZ - Walter	7 KB9VF - Geo	8 WD9AIH - Bill	9 K8MPV - Bob	10 K8VW - Verle
11	12 WB9YUR - Bill	13 N8NPW - Geo, DF4IZ - Walter	14 W9PMA - Phil	15 N8XLS - Denny	16 ABØHU - David	17 WD9IQV - Charlie
18	19 WA8IHI - Chuck	20 WD8ADG - Fred, DF4IZ - Walter	21 WØPC- Rick	22 KB9VF - Geo	23 WD9AIH - Bill	24 K8MPV - Bob
25	26 K8VW - Verle	27 WB9YUR - Bill, DF4IZ - Walter	28 N8NPW - Geo	29 W9PMA - Phil	30 N8XLS - Denny	31 ABØHU - David

Notes:



Ed, K8DSS in his comfortable hamshack in front of his K3. He has a stealth wire antenna up in the trees out back.



Ed and Susan along with Helen and Rick across the table relaxing out by the pool. Beautiful weather! Hated to come home to the cold north country.



# Stretching You Hard Earned Dollar You Must Ask for the Discount

## TRAVEL

### Airlines:

Alaska Airlines: 50% off (65+)

American Airlines: various discounts for 50% off non-peak periods (Tuesdays – Thursdays) (62+) (call before booking for discount)

Continental Airlines: No initiation fee for Continental Presidents Club and special fares for select destinations.

Southwest Airlines: Various discounts for ages 65 and up (call before booking for discount)

United Airlines: Various discounts for ages 65 and up (call before booking for discount).

U.S. Airways: Various discounts for ages 65 and up (call before booking for discount)

### Rail:

Amtrak: 15% off (62+)

## CAR RENTAL

Alamo Car Rental: up to 25% off for AARP members

Avis: up to 25% off for AARP members

Budget Rental Cars: 40% off; up to 50% off for AARP members (50+)

Dollar Rent-a-Car: 10% off (50+) Enterprise Rent-A-Car: 5% off for AARP members

Hertz: up to 25% off for AARP members

National Rent-A-Car: up to 30% off for AARP members

## OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS:

Holiday Inn: 20-40% off depending on location (62+)

Best Western: 40% off (55+)

Cambria Suites: 20% - 30% off (60+)

Waldorf Astoria – NYC \$5,000 off nightly rate for presidential suite (55+)

Clarion Motels: 20-30% off (60+)

Comfort Inn: 20-30% off (60+)

Comfort Suites: 20-30% off (60+)

Econo Lodge: 40% off (60+)

Hampton Inn and Suites: 40% off when booked 72 hours in advance

Hyatt Hotels: 25-50% off (62+)

InterContinental Hotels Group: various discounts at all hotels (65+)

Mainstay Suites: 10% off with Mature Traveler's Discount (50+); 20-30% off (60+)

Marriott Hotels: 25% off (62+)

Motel 6: Stay Free Sunday nights (60+)

Myrtle Beach Resort: 30% off (55+)

Quality Inn: 40-50% off (60+)

Rodeway Inn: 20-30% off (60+)

Sleep Inn: 40% off (60+)

## ACTIVITIES AND ENTERTAINMENT

AMC Theaters: up to 30% off (55+)

Bally Total Fitness: \$100 off memberships (62+)

Busch Gardens Tampa, FL: \$13 off one-day tickets (50+)

Carmike Cinemas: 35% off (65+)

Cinemark/Century Theaters: up to 35% off

US National Parks: \$10 lifetime pass, 50% off additional services, including camping (62+)

Regal Cinemas: 50% off Ripley's Believe it or Not: \$2 one-day ticket (55+)

Sea World, Orlando, FL: \$3 off one-day tickets (50+)

## CELL PHONE DISCOUNTS

AT&T: Special senior national 200 plan \$19.99 month (65+)

Jitterbug: \$10/month cell phone service (50+)

Verizon Wireless: Verizon Nationwide 65 Plus Plan \$29.99/month ((65+)

## MISCELLANEOUS

Great Clips: \$8 off hair cuts (60+)

Supercuts: \$8 off haircuts (60+)



# Net Control Schedule

## June 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 WD9IQV - Charlie	3 WD8ADG - Fred	4 WB8M - Wally	5 WØPC- Rick	6 KB9VF - Geo	7 WD9AIH - Bill
8	9 K8MPV - Bob	10 K8VW - Verle	11 WB9YUR - Bill	12 N8NPW - Geo	13 W9PMA - Phil	14 N8XLS - Denny
15	16 ABØHU - David	17 WD9IQV - Charlie	18 WD8ADG - Fred	19 WB8M - Wally	20 WØPC- Rick	21 KB9VF - Geo
22	23 WD9AIH - Bill	24 K8MPV - Bob	25 K8VW - Verle	26 WB9YUR - Bill	27 N8NPW - Geo	28 W9PMA - Phil
29	30 N8XLS - Denny	Notes:  <b>DX Net: Walter, DF4IZ resumes November 4th</b>				

### **Bob Wilson, K8MPV**

On the way to Florida, Helen and I stopped in Peachtree City, GA for the night and had a great visit with Bob and his XYL. They have a very nice home and as you can see a well equipped ham station. Bob has a couple of Kenwood transceivers: TS-590 and a TS-570 along with a Drake L7 Amp. I was having so much fun chatting, I forgot to take a picture of Bob and his station...so he sent me one via email. 73, Rick





# Amateur Radio Club

[www.gmarc.org](http://www.gmarc.org)

## GM Amateur Radio Club Membership Application

*Membership in the GM Amateur Radio Club is open to anyone interested in amateur radio*

New Member [  ]      Renewal [  ]      Heritage [  ]

Present Call Sign \_\_\_\_\_ ARRL member yes/ no \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to be called \_\_\_\_\_ (This will be used for the First Name on your ID Badge)

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

If you are/were a GM employee - Work location \_\_\_\_\_

Yearly dues are: January 1 -- December 31

[  ] \$20.00 Individual [  ] \$30.00 Family [  ] Heritage \$10 (first year free)

Please make checks payable to: **GM Amateur Radio Club or GMARC**

**Note: Please enclose a passport photo (for your membership id)**

Mail to: **GMARC**  
**Bobby Corr - N8CY**  
45601 Fox Ln w apt 106  
Shelby Township, MI 48317-5054

**Note from the Editor:** Many of our old Firebird ARC have also joined the GMARC as "Heritage" members. Nets are on WW8GM/R (443.075 MHz) linked to Echolink via WW8GM-R Monday's @ 8 PM EST or 0:00 Z