



Stationary Station Ken Malgren K7MAL at Bubba's Travel Stop in Dime Box.



Calvin Burnham, WB5YYQ, communicating via a mobile short wave radio setup.



Mark Allison, KI5DYC, Net Control for the Precinct 4 Exercise.

ARES Operators Test Emergency Communications in Lee County Exercises

Lee County Amateur Radio Emergency Service, LeeCARES, successfully completed a communications exercise on Saturday March 20, 2021. The objective of the exercise was to test radio reception from different locations in Precinct 4 from both mobile units and base stations. Four LeeCARES members operated mobile units from a total of 28 locations from south of Dime Box to north of Lexington, and two members operated from stationary locations to assist the net control operator who was based in Lexington.

At each location, radio operators evaluated radio signals using both of the amateur radio repeaters in Lee County and from mobile unit to mobile unit (simplex). Only a few locations were not reachable using simplex.

Both repeater signals were strong everywhere, including where cell phone service was poor or non-existent. Additional research is ongoing to determine the best locations to set up a temporary station with an elevated antenna mast in the Lexington area during an emergency event where communications has been disrupted.

Efforts to map radio signals in Lee County continues, with the next exercise tentatively scheduled for mid-May.

We are whole heartedly thankful to Commissioner Steven Knobloch, ZochNet, Lexington ISD, and Bubba's Travel Stop for allowing us the use of their premises during the exercise.

LeeCARES also participated on Friday, March 19, 2021, in a Florida emergency communications exercise sponsored by the Florida Baptist Disaster

Relief group. This exercise involved the Florida State Division of Emergency Management, the Emergency Operations Centers of five Florida Counties, one city, and several dozen volunteers from 13 states. The exercise simulated the devastation caused by a band of tornadoes moving across the Florida peninsula, taking down power and internet in their swaths, and then a terrorist attack on a telephone switching hub in the north east corner of the state.

It closely simulated the actual disaster caused by hurricane straight line winds that tore through two mid-western states in August last year, and left the city of Cedar Rapids, Iowa largely cut off from state disaster officials.

LeeCARES received special unannounced instructions during the exercise that generated several Winlink (email via amateur radio) messages and a few voice messages during the exercise.

According to Marida Favia del Core Borrromeo, LeeCARES Emergency Coordinator, "These exercises help us to hone

our skills and learn new techniques. In the event of an emergency that disrupts communications in the county, we're here to assist where we can."

The Lee County Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (LeeCARES) is a member of the American Radio Relay League. The purpose of LeeCARES is to furnish emergency communication when regular communication fails or is inadequate during natural or man-made disasters.

LeeCARES consists of licensed radio amateur operators who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment with their local ARES leadership to assist with communications when disaster strikes.

If you are a licensed operator, or you have a scanner, we can be found on the Giddings repeater frequency of 147.22 MHz during our training nets every Monday night at 7 p.m. We meet on the third Sunday of each month at Elm Creek Café. Please verify meeting and repeater information on our website at www.leecares.org.



Julia Allison KI5LNM; Ken Malgren K7MAL, ARES District 7 Emergency Coordinator; Jason Korb KI-5ABB, LeeCARES Operations Section Chief for the exercise; Marida Favia del Core Borrromeo, KD5BJ LeeCARES Emergency Coordinator and Planning Section Chief; Gaye Lynn Bailey KF5PWN LeeCARES Assistant E.C and Operations; Calvin Burnham WB5YYQ; and Jeff Bullard KI5HHI.