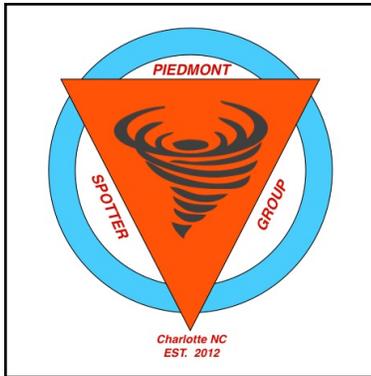


NEWSLETTER



Interchangeable? Not Exactly.

Piedmont Spotter Group and Charlotte Regional Skywarn share some items in common and can easily be confused as one in the same, but in all actuality they are two coinciding organizations.

PSG is the Training Net and a more social gathering of Skywarn Trained Spotters. PSG offers a Net each evening that allows Trained and UnTrained to learn and practice skills that they will be able to use during Severe WX. PSG encourages the growth and development of those wishing to be Trained Skywarn Spotters, and also helps build relationships within the Amateur Radio Community.

Charlotte Regional Skywarn is the business side. Charlotte Regional Skywarn consists of an appointed District Coordinator (appointed by the EC in Greenville-Spartanburg), his Assistant District Coordinator, the Net Control Operators selected by the DC, and the Trained Skywarn Spotters that are all through out the 15 county

region that makes up Charlotte Regional Skywarn. Charlotte Regional Skywarn is not a social event, it's business. If Charlotte Regional Skywarn is involved in a social event, it will be at the discretion of the District Coordinator and all social/promotional items should be signed off by him or those he has appointed to approve such endeavors.

The Piedmont Spotter Group and Charlotte Regional Skywarn work great together and each group has its separate set of objectives, even though the lines between the two groups are so close together. These close dividing lines are intentional for seamless operations, but are still in place to keep confusion to a minimum. Thank you all for participating with us and we look forward to visiting with you all EACH night at 8 pm for the Piedmont Spotter Group Net on 145.230. If Severe WX is present, Charlotte Regional Skywarn will activate on that frequency.

Restaurant Review

Burgers here, Burgers there, Burgers seem to be everywhere.

This month we are visiting a Burger joint. This place has two locations, One in West Charlotte and a newly opened Huntersville Location. Pinky's Westside Grill is this months Restaurant of choice. The Burgers are priced along the line of most joints that are of higher quality than fast food. I got an awesome Patty Melt that was about \$5, but you have to get the homemade chips and some fried pickles too! The Sweet Tea is a treat all by itself! Maybe it's a Hotdog you want, Go for it! This place has Salads, Crab Balls (kind of a Crab Meat hushpuppy), and did I mention the Burgers? There is an Eclectic blend of personalities at each location so everyone fits in. This has quickly become one of my favorites. BTW the Charlotte Location DOES have a VW on top of the building! Visit their website <http://eatatpinkys.com/> and then swing by and show Greg Auten (formerly of the Penguin) some love!

Charlotte Regional SKYWARN® News

During Severe Weather what we report and how we report is important. Below is a list of Criteria that NWS is looking for during severe weather. We've all seen this before in our Spotter Manual or Online, but a refresher look at these is needed from time to time prior to the Spring Storm season.

Severe Weather Criteria

In the event of severe weather, the National Weather Service looks for the following criteria:

- Hail – any size initially; then penny size, ¾" diameter or larger thereafter
- Measured wind speeds of 50 mph or greater
- Measured rainfall of 1" or more that occurs within an hour's time of less
- Flooding and flash flooding where none normally occurs
- Rotating wall clouds, funnel clouds or tornadoes
- Damage caused by high winds such as downed limbs and trees and their approximate diameter and building and roof damage.

Spotter reports are always needed when severe weather is occurring. However, please note that the National Weather Service defines severe weather criteria. Please do not make non-criteria reports unless specifically requested to do by the Net Control Station.

Chris Gay, N1CRG
Charlotte Regional Skywarn DC
CharlotteSkywarn.com



2 Meter Sideband

By Jose B Rivera - N2LRB

August 23, 2012 - East Harlem, NY - Recently I decided to check in on any possible 2 meter sideband activity using my Yaesu FT-857D multiband multimode radio. I was surprised to not only find some activity, but a lot of activity. Well, more than there use to be anyway. Ever thought of trying out 2 meter sideband? If so, keep reading to learn just a little more of what it is all about.

What is 2 Meter Sideband?

2 meter sideband is working the Upper Single Sideband mode anywhere from 144.200-275 Mhz. This band and mode is a lot like working the HF SSB band only it's on 2 meters. Even though the ARRL Band Plan from 2 meters has the SSB going from 144.200-144.275 Mhz, do not be surprised to hear stations from 144.175. to 144.300 Mhz. In fact a group of older gentlemen meet every weekday morning on 144.176 in the New York City, New Jersey area.

What is needed to work 2 Meter Sideband?

In order to work 2 Meter Sideband you must have either an all mode radio which receives and transmits 2 meters or a dedicated 2 meter SSB radio (older models of ham gear). Your regular 2 meter handheld or 2 meter mobile FM radio does not transmit or receive on sideband. You will also need some kind of horizontally polarized antenna. Most 2 meter sideband operators use loops, quads, dipoles or beams. You could use a vertical antenna, but your will not hear or be heard as well as with a horizontally polarized antenna. Some hams also have amplifiers to up their wattage. The combination of a beam antenna (the more elements the better) along with an amplifier of even just 200 watts output can make for a very strong signal. Having a Pre-Amp either at the base of your antenna or in the shack will allow you to pick up weak signals. So a pre-amp is a good thing to have.

How much activity?

Unlike 2 meter repeaters where activity is plentiful, 2 meter SSB tends to have a lot less hams operating on the air. This can be attributed to most 2 meter equipment being FM and not having an SSB mode. So in New York City you may come across 50 hams on 2 meter SSB or the span of a few months. That does not mean that 2 meter SSB is not worth it or that contacts are limited to the local area. Just like on the HF bands, the ionosphere plays a role in distance communications. When the conditions are right contacts as far away as 1,000 miles or more can be made, though the most common is from 25-300 miles.

When to get on the air?

This writer's experience with this mode of operation is that most activity can be found in the early evenings after most hams come home from work. Weekends are another time to get on and hear other hams rag chewing. And as mentioned above, there are now two morning nets in the New York City area and they both start at 8:00 AM. Look for the nets on 144.176 (older gentlemen) and on 144.205 (younger gentlemen)

Grid Squares

One fun activity for 2 meters sideband hams is to collect grid squares. The U.S. is divided into small squares. Just like collecting countries is a challenge for HF hams, collecting grid squares is also a challenge for 2 meter sideband hams. And course there are a few contest through out the year in which operators garner points for make as many contacts as possible in different situations (base, portable, etc...).

Overall, 2 meter sideband can be challenging, fun, and a great way to make new friends.

Check out Jose's Ham page
www.n2lrb.com

Local Nets

Daily Nets:

8:00 PM PSGnet	145.230 tone 118.8
8:00 PM PETN	145.350
9:00 PM CLTMetro 2 meter Emergency Net	146.940 tone 118.8
9:00 PM Blue Ridge Emergency Net (GSP)	146.610 tone
9:30 PM Central Carolina Traffic Net (Wilkesboro)	146.820 tone 94.8

Mondays:

8:30 PM Shelby ARES Net	146.880
9:00 PM Cleveland Co Simplex Net (1st Monday of the month)	147.505

Tuesdays:

7:00 PM Catawba Co RACES	145.170 tone 88.5
7:30 PM Gaston Co. Amateur Radio Society	147.120 tone 100
8:30 PM Triad SKYWARN® Net	147.255 tone 82.5

Wednesdays:

7:30 PM Mecklenburg ARES Net	146.940 tone 118.8
8:30 PM Rowan Emergency Net	145.410 tone 136.5
9:00 PM GAARC Amateur Radio Operators Net (ARES)	146.805 tone 100
9:00 PM ICARS Net W4SNC	146.685 tone 77
9:00 PM Prayer Net	145.350

Thursdays:

7:00 PM Gaston ARES	147.120 tone 100
7:30 PM Lincoln RACES	147.015 tone 141.3
8:00 PM Boone NC	147.360 tone 103.5

Fridays:

8:00 PM GRITS net	147.150
8:30 PM Shelby ARES	146.880

Saturdays:

8:30 PM Dixie Radio Pirates Net	145.410 tone 136.5
9:00 PM 6600 Net	145.190

Sundays:

8:30 PM Mecklenburg Simplex Net	147.505
9:00 PM Caldwell Amateur Radio Emergency Services Net (CARES)	147.330 tone 141.3
9:00 PM Prayer Net	145.350

Net Totals

Month of December and 2013 Totals

December 2013

Traffic	0
Announcements	77
Check ins	827
Minutes	1095
Nets	31
CI per Net	35.32

So, How Have We Done? PSGNet 2013! **BY Jeff KA4WYC**

I have to start this with - **THANK YOU!** For all you do, keeping the PSGNet going, covering when we needed help, and joining the Net each night that you can make it. Thank you...!

Since **Aug. 7 2013**, our first PSGNet, we have had **147 Nets**.

16 DIFFERENT NCO's covering each and every Net.

So who called the most nets? **Steve KJ4FEL** had it for most of the time, WITH **20 Nets**. BUT somehow I had **22**. Next was **Bill KI4ZCT** with **19**. So do you know your totals?

Chris - 15

Lee - 15

Jeff - 22

Steve - 20

Bill - 19

Greg - 7

Les - 17

Bryan - 3

Jodie - 2

Larry - 1 (come on Larry, you going to let Jodie beat ya?)

Ben - 6

Tony - 4

David - 1 (same msg to David...!)

Rick - 4

John - 9 (**been missing you John!**)

Jeffery - 2

I hope to have an Alternate Week sometime in January, so you Alt. NCO's be thinking of a Night you'd like to call a Net.

Of the 147 days we had;

4,978 minutes, 3,625 Check ins, 278 announcements, 5 pieces of Traffic, (boy would I love to see this number increase!

This is only a Benchmark for 2014. We'll have 7 more months to operate a net. More events, like another Big 100 Net on our Frequency! Hopefully more check ins. More Rag Chew Nets. More NTS Traffic. We have a Great Group of NCO's. Work on spreading the word. It's hard to differentiate between PSGNet and Skywarn because we work so closely with each other. I added the 6 Skywarn Nets below but not to the PSGNet totals.

Aug. we had 3 Nets

Date	8-13-13	8-15-13	8-31-13
Check ins -	12	8	4
Minutes -	90	36	65
NCO	N1CRG KA4WYC	KK4RMS	

Sept. we had 2 Nets

Date	9-1-13	9-12-13
Check ins	20	5
Minutes	59	67
NCO	N1CRG N1CRG	
ALT NCO	KA4WYC	KA4WYC

Dec. we had 1 Net

Date	12-22-13
Check ins	7
Minutes	62
NCO	K4NET

73

Jeff KA4WYC PSGNet Manager

Metamucil Net

Just Another Net, At Midnight...!

By Jeff KA4WYC

For the 4th year in a row, there will be a Metamucil Net on the W4BFB Repeater 145.230 (-) tone 118.8. Come join us for a midnight check in. We'll start around 23:45 on December 31st and continue until we get tired of talking or fall asleep.

I've been asked about the history of the Net. Well, with a lot of things it just kind of devolved over the years. It stems from an early morning drive time. Myself, KA4WYC and Butch WB4KJV were always in there around 04:45, with others checking in to say "Hey" like Steve KJ4FEL, and Gina KJ4PAF ! We'd talk of yesterday's events, government shake ups, etc. But it would always lead to one of two topics, eating or our current health conditions. I came up with the Metamucil Drive Time Net, and it stuck. It even moved to the afternoon Drive Time too. We have such a great love for

everyone on the Radio, Weave (Scott) W4EV may be the first one to coin "The Tough Love Net". Yes, with barbs sent each way, and should a new Ham check in, they were privy to such abuse, but with the kindest of love one could muster. Such calls in the Drive Time were, Jack KG4BGA, Butch WB4KJV, Jeff KA4WYC, Frank KJ4YHK, and Weave W4EV. There were others, too numerous to name here. As conversations go we either talked of eating somewhere or our pains and ills of the day. Again, the "Drive Time Metamucil Net" was called to order.

After several years of this I decided to have a Midnight Net. Not being one to party hardy at New Year's Eve, I announced there was going to be a Net on New Year's Eve - The Metamucil Net. The first Net was held on Dec. 31st 2010. I would check people in and they would give the year they were first licensed. We averaged around 15-25 Hams wishing everyone a Happy New Year! Some of the Charter Members have checked in every year.

I hope you decide to check in too!!! And Happy New Year!! 73 Jeff KA4WYC

PS -This year we had 29 checks ins and ran the Net for 38 minutes! There were three Charter Members, Scott W4EV, Butch WB4KJV, and myself as NCO Jeff KA4WYC

Words From Billy K9OH Skywarn EC NWS GSP

(This a letter that Billy Irwin - K9OH sent in response to our statistics for the PSGNet for 2013.)

I personally would like to thank all of you for a great start in the new Skywarn model set forth for the future! These types of statistics are going to be valuable especially during active severe weather. This will continue to show the valuable assets amateur radio provides to the NWS. I will be sharing this information with them.

Best Regards,

Billy L. Irwin - K9OH
Emergency Coordinator
National Weather Service
Forecast Office
Greenville-Spartanburg
(Greer, SC)
GSP Regional Skywarn
www.gspskywarn.org
Phone: [864-497-2325](tel:864-497-2325)

Final Thoughts: January 11, 2014 Severe WX

A line of Severe W_x producing storms came through Saturday Jan, 11. The first Skywarn net of 2014 was called due to the Severe Thunderstorm Warnings that preceded the arrival of the line of storms. The weather through our area was pretty tame but there was some flooding, wind damage and hail* reported (during a later storm that evening).

This first Skywarn activated net for 2014 yielded **12 reports, 26 check-ins, and lasted 119 minutes.** NCO's for this Skywarn Net were: Jeff KA4WYC on air, and N1CRG sending reports via NWSchat. There were many others working in the background and the whole team made the first net a good one. Thank you all for your advance preparations and dedication. Now let's get ready for those spring storms. Hopefully the January storm isn't a sign of an extremely active spring storm season....but if it is, I'm glad to be part of this fine team!

Lee Sossamon
kk4gev
-Asst. DC Charlotte
Regional Skywarn
-PR/Marketing PSG

Calendar

Skywarn Spotter Training

TBA (but coming very soon)

MORE TO COME

Contacts

Twitter:

@piedmontspotter

Facebook:

Piedmont Spotter Group

Website:

www.piedmontspottergroup.com