

# PLATINUM COAST AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY (PCARS) MELBOURNE, FLORIDA

PCARS is an amateur radio club located in Melbourne, Florida, that serves primarily South Brevard County. The club is a Florida non-profit corporation with about 150 members, and it has existed for over fifty years. PCARS is affiliated with the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), which is a national membership organization for licensed amateur radio operators.

PCARS amateur radio operators, often called "HAMS" participate in a wide variety of amateur radio activities. These include providing disaster communications, experimenting with things like amateur TV and satellite communications, competing in amateur radio competitions, and contacting amateurs around the world. Our members use not only voice, but many different modes of communications, such as Morse code, amateur television, radio teletype and other digital modes using computer interfaces.

The club has an FCC issued amateur radio call sign, W4MLB, and a well-equipped amateur radio station. This station has been used by club members to compete with other clubs and groups around the world in various radio sport competitions. As members of the club started winning more and more of these competitions, other teams started referring to us as those "Florida Boys," a name that has stuck with our PCARS contest group.

Two VHF-FM repeaters and one UHF repeater are owned and operated by the club. These enable consistent and effective communication over a large part of Brevard County using small hand-held transceivers. These repeaters have been very valuable in helping club members support Red Cross Shelters during hurricanes, and in supporting public service events. Most PCARS members are also members of the Amateur Radio Emergency service (ARES), and the club is a vital part of the Brevard Emergency Amateur Radio Service (BEARS).

The Melbourne Hamfest has been sponsored by PCARS since 1965. This annual event is held the second weekend in October at the Melbourne Auditorium. It draws over 2000 enthusiasts from all over the state of Florida and beyond. It's a time of fellowship, attending forums, browsing through tables piled high with Radio equipment, and "eye-balling" all of the latest equipment available through retail outlets.

In addition to providing reliable communications for worthy public service events (races, parades, mock disasters, etc), PCARS sponsors regular classes to teach interested individuals the technical theory required to obtain an FCC issued Amateur Radio License.

For additional information on Amateur Radio, or if you're interested in having PCARS provide communications for a special public service event, contact PCARS at PO Box 1004, Melbourne, FL 32902-1004.