

Virginia Section of the ARRL February Section Manager's Report (Covering January)

++Legislative News++

I have received several inquiries about the Amateur Radio Protection Act (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/4006>), which has the full title of "To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to prohibit the application of certain private land use restrictions to amateur station antennas, and for other purposes". The current status is that it has been sent back to the sub-committee, and has picked up 9 co-sponsors, but none from VA. I recommend reading over the bill and if you feel that it is something that would benefit amateur radio operators, write your representative and encourage them to co-sponsor it. You can find that information at this link: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

++Affiliated Club Coordinator++

The folks at HamCall.net, in Mineral VA (HamCall World-Wide Callsign Database) have an extensive database of current and past Hams reaching back decades. Recently, Dan and his team at HamCall took the time to run the stats for Hams in the ARRL Virginia Section, from 2000 to 2023. The annual listing includes the numbers of new Hams joining the hobby, as well as the losses by those not renewing their licenses. The trends reflect both the impact of the 2006 decision by the FCC to relax code proficiency, and the 2022 impact of Congressionally-mandated FCC license fee requirement. While the national trend of the number of licensed Hams dropped by 2% per year since 2021, the stats for Virginia show a slight, continual growth in net Hams in the Commonwealth.

If you'd like to assist with the affiliated club coordination, please get with Mike WA8AHZ at aimoniema AT aol DOT com. The goal is to divide Virginia into a few smaller, more manageable sections.

+++ Training and Testing Opportunities+++

Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club:

Technician License Prep Class and Exam, Saturday and Sunday, February 24 and 25! The Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club (SPARC) will conduct a Technician License Preparation Class at the Eastern Loudoun Sheriff's Station located at 46620 East Frederick Dr., Sterling, VA 20164 on Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024, 8 am to 5 pm. and on Sunday, Feb. 25, 2024, 8 am to 12 pm. Exam for Tech Class begins at 1 pm. No Fee for class. Fee for exam and FCC license application (reduced fee for under 18 candidates). Prior registration required, contact Amit, WY2Z at amit5201@gmail.com. For more info: <https://www.qsl.net/sterling/Licensing/licensing.html>

Amateur Radio License Exams on Sunday, February 25th at 1 pm, Walk-ins Welcome! The Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club (SPARC) will conduct an Amateur Radio license

Examination Session at 1 pm at the Eastern Loudoun Sheriff's Station located at 46620 East Frederick Dr., Sterling, VA 20164. Walk-ins welcome and accepted until 2:45 pm! Fee for exam and FCC license application (reduced fee for under 18 candidates). For exam instructions go to <https://www.gsl.net/sterling/Licensing/licensing.html> or contact Gordon, NQ4K, at gormil@aol.com

Richmond Amateur Radio Club:

Would you like to prepare for your Technician, General or Amateur Extra exam in a class taught by friendly, licensed and experienced hams?...*and* pick up new radio skills? Join us for RARC's 53rd year of providing you the "why", not just the "answers" to exam questions. You'll remember the answers better and know more about how to set up and operate safely and legally. Registration opened January 29, 2024 for all three Amateur Radio test prep classes, *plus* the Radio Skills Seminars! Most classes held at Bon Air United Methodist Church 1645 Buford Rd, Richmond, VA 23235

Click this link to see classes, dates & fees: <https://rarclub.net/license/class-schedules/>

Questions? Email: school@rarclub.net or contact Bruce MacAlister at 804-353-4269 (daytime only)

+++Club Grants Window Open+++

Open throughout the month of February: Grants to Amateur Radio Organizations!

The ARRL Foundation grants program awards limited funding to organizations for eligible amateur radio related projects and initiatives, particularly those with a focus on educating, licensing, and supporting Amateur Radio activities.

More information can be found on the ARRL website: arrl.org/amateur-radio-grants

++Section Youth Coordinator++

Amateur Radio in Support of Tidewater Council University of Scouting - Join Us!

Greetings from the Virginia Youth Section Leader! Exciting news for amateur radio enthusiasts! On March 9, 2024 (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM), join us at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA, for the Tidewater Council University of Scouting, supported by the VA Section Youth Coordinator and local Amateur Radio Clubs.

Amateur Radio Outreach: As part of our commitment to fostering interest in amateur radio among scouts, youth, and the general population, we will be setting up a dedicated station (K2B) and display. This initiative aims to stimulate curiosity and promote the fascinating world of amateur radio.

What to Expect: At this scouting jamboree-style event held at Old Dominion University, participants can look forward to a plethora of engaging scouting opportunities, including interactive training sessions and certifications, hands-on activities, and adventurous experiences. Merit badges and avenues for personal advancement will be in abundance, alongside personalized Scout quests offering fantastic prizes and rewards.

Anticipated Attendance: We anticipate a vibrant gathering with an expected turnout of 300-400 attendees, representing a diverse cross-section of participants, including 150-250 adults (aged 18 and above), 75-125 middle/high school-aged Scouts, and 50 elementary school-aged Scouts.

All scouts and volunteers are welcome. Don't miss this unique scouting and amateur radio experience!

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McKenzie Denton (KO4GLN)

McKenzie Denton

Virginia Section Youth Coordinator

KO4GLN@arrl.net

++Upcoming Events++

+++Virginia QSO Party+++

Activate Rare Counties & Cities for VQP

Want to work a pileup? You may already be in the right place! The Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club (SPARC) hosts the annual Virginia QSO Party, and has provided a wealth of information on which Counties/Independent Cities are the rarest. If you want to get a top score, go set up in one of those rare counties and the QSOs will come rolling in!

You can find all the information on the ARRLVA.com page at <https://www.arrlva.com/vaqsoparty2024.php>

++ Get On The Air For Life (GOTA 4 Life) ++

Ed Gibbs, Assistant Section Manager, submitted an article on the GOTA 4 Life initiative to the League, and it's being reviewed now. More to come on this exciting program!

+++Hamfests+++

02/17/2024 Page Valley Amateur Radio Club Hamfest

Location: VFW Post 9292

13958 Spotswood Trail

Elkton, VA 22827

Sponsor: Page Valley Amateur Radio Club

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Talk-In: 146.625 PL 131.8

Public Contact: Carrie Matter , KM4WDX

611 Williams Ave. Shenandoah, VA 22849

Phone: 540-298-8906

Email: pvarccarrie@gmail.com

03/10/2024 - Winterfest - The National Capital Area Ham Radio Fair

Location: Vienna, VA

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Vienna Wireless Society

Website: <https://viennawireless.net/wp/events/winterfest/>

04/13/2024 - Thawfest II

Location: Ruckersville, VA

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Greene County VA ARC

Website: <https://thawfest.net>

06/01/2024 Ole Virginia Hams Tailgate

Location: Manassas, VA

Type: Regular Hamfest

Sponsor: W4OVH Ole Virginia Hams

Website: <https://w4ovh.net/tailgate/>

08/04/2024 - SVARC Berryville Hamfest / Virginia Section Convention

Location: Berryville, VA

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Shenandoah Valley Amateur Radio Club

Website: <https://berryvillehamfest.com/>

For more information see: <https://www.arrl.org/hamfests/search>

+++Contest Calendar+++

You can download the handy reference

at: <http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Contest%20Calendar/ARRL%20Contests%20Calendar%202023-2024.pdf> or see the interactive calendar at <http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar>

++Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)++

The Virginia Section ARES reported over 15,000 hours of training throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. That's over \$465,000 of training value that the State, Counties, Independent Cities, and volunteer partners did not have to spend. We have also had some great interactions with the Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters, and are working towards developing more interactive ways to train with them.

If you would like to help with rebuilding these or other programs throughout the Commonwealth, please let me know. I can put you in contact with the correct people so that we can get more amateurs licensed, and get them active in their communities either through ARES or other community engagements.

Our Section Emergency Coordinator, Marty KE4KEW, has requested to step aside for an indefinite period. In the interim, please reach out to Jack KE4LWT. A rotating list of Acting/Interim Section Emergency Coordinators is being developed and will be circulated to ARES leadership.

+++ARES January Report+++

The ARES Monthly Report will continue to be sent out as a separate document. This goes both via the ARRL mailing list and to ARES Leadership for further distribution.

If you are an EC and do not have the current link to the report, please contact Jack at KE4LWT at GMAIL dot COM. The report format was changed by HQ to capture more hours better. And speaking of hours, each hour is equivalent to our partner organizations spending \$31.84 in training an operator.

+++ARRL/ARES MOU with VDEM Update+++

After almost two years of work between the Virginia Section of the ARRL, the Virginia Dept. of Emergency Management (VDEM), the Virginia Attorney General's (VA AG) Office, and ARRL HQ, we have a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) ready to be signed. The first round of the MOU was pretty good, but VDEM and VA AG requested some changes that make it so much better. I'm waiting on the thumbs up from VDEM for gathering the needed signatures, but this is a huge change that not only reinforces our relationship, but provides many benefits that ARES did not previously have in Virginia.

+++Simulated Emergency Test (SET)+++

The ARRL has made a substantial change to the SET planning and execution that recognizes that many Sections may have real-world events occurring during the Fall window, and now allows for the scheduling and execution of the SET throughout the year. The annual SET report will remain in the September QST.

+++Partner Sponsored Exercise+++

None reported at this time.

++Section Traffic Manager Report++

++ New Net(s)++

Beginning 8:00 pm on Wednesday Feb 7:

Net name: South Central Virginia ARES Net

Meets weekly on Wednesday at 8:00 pm

Net Frequency: 147.000 + 77hz tone

Basic coverage: Nottoway county, Brunswick, Mecklenburg, parts of Greensville and Dinwiddie

Net Manager: Glenn Wells KY4LP, District Emergency Coordinator, Virginia District 1, Ky4lp@arrl.net

Will handle NTS traffic during nets

++Section Manager Close-out++

A quick word about the print magazines. If you are a life member, you can request to continue to receive print QST. Maxim donors will continue to receive QST. Individual term members can continue to receive print QST for an additional \$25 per year. All members can receive all four magazines (QST, On The Air, NCJ, and QEX) on any of your devices, either via the website or using any of the applications that you can download for free at <http://www.arrl.org/qst>. In fact, you can "carry" the past 12 years of all them on your devices. Try that with the printed versions! I have tested the iOS version on a very old iPad, a newish one, and on my Android based tablet and can say that the ability to search and zoom in is a major plus for me.

The Club Grants window is open, and is a great way for your club to fund those growth initiatives. For more information on that, see <https://www.arrl.org/amateur-radio-grants> for details.

Speaking of clubs, make sure you update your club information, especially if you are/were a Special Service Club (SSC). If you don't update your data, your club can lose its SSC status or its affiliation status. You can do that quite easily by following the information at <http://www.arrl.org/club-update>. Besides the things like the Club Commission Program and the referrals, there is also the ARRL Library Book Set discount. With this, your club can purchase a set of books for donation to your local library at a large discount. This can help you gain membership from the traffic at your local library.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to me.

73,

Jack KE4LWT