

## Virginia Section of the ARRL August Section Manager's Report (Covering July)

### ++Safety Note++

This month is going to be a little different due to recent events.

Tropical Storm Debby has made her way here, and the impacts were felt along the NC/VA border and along the Blue Ridge. The Virginia Section Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES), along with other volunteer groups, was asked to stand by to support if needed, and we did. Being safe is also being prepared. We are much more prepared than we were a few years ago.

I'm sure that by now you know about the cyber-attack on the ARRL systems, and that may have affected your access to sub-systems such as the Learning Center, the phone system, or Logbook of The World (LOTW). But how many of us have taken efforts to protect ourselves and our families from such incidents? Do you reuse the same password? Do you use robust passwords? Do you share passwords? What about backups of family photos, important files, etc.? Yes, CDs and DVDs are antiquated by today's standard, but they are a very good backup for those critical files.

In my paid job, I travel all over the US for disaster response, and invariably at some point along the way my credit card is "skimmed" and my card company's anti-fraud division disables the card immediately, requiring me to switch to cash or another card. This disaster was no different. Within a week of arrival, I lost the use of my card and had to switch to backups. Even our work systems come under attack during disasters from bot-farms attempting to steal from us taxpayers.

No sector in the US is truly safe from this. The Environmental Protection Agency just recently warned about vulnerabilities to our water supply, and even the nation's government agency charged with cybersecurity, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) was attacked just weeks ago. We all need to have a safety and security plan in place, especially as we advertise ourselves as being ready "when all else fails".

Take a minute to evaluate your cyber-security and safety. Have a backup plan. And always be careful when answering calls that purport to be your financial institution or other "reputable" sources.

### ++Affiliated Club Coordinator++

### +++ Volunteer Opportunity, National Capital Region+++

Ham volunteers are asked to sign up to support the running of the 49<sup>th</sup> Marine Corps Marathon on Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup> using a two-step process:

- First, sign up w/ the Marine Corps Marathon and state you wish to serve as an Amateur Radio Operator (ARO)  
at: <https://www.marinemarathon.com/volunteer/>

- Second, finish the volunteer sign up process by going to <https://hamvolunteers.com/>

“Why volunteer to support the MCM? First, it’s fun and rewarding working side by side with other Hams and assist the US Marines in this annual event held in the Nation’s capital area. Participating in Public Service activities, such as providing emergency communications and situation awareness helps prepare Hams for future real-world emergency communications events.

+++Consolidated Report+++

Thirty-six of the VA Section ARRL affiliated Clubs advertised their Field Day activities on the ARRL “Field Day Locator” website this year, and many reported a large number of Get On the Air (GOTA) visitors, including school-age kids making their first QSO. The Clubs are eagerly preparing for the ARRL North American QSO Party operating events, and are using the events to invite folks from Field Day to join them again to continue becoming radio active.

+++ARRL VA Section Affiliated Club Coordinators+++

If you'd like to assist with the affiliated club coordination, please get with Mike WA8AHZ at WA8AHZ AT arrl DOT net . The goal is to divide Virginia into a few smaller, more manageable sections. Currently JC Hassall (JHASSALL at GMAIL dot Com) and Kenneth Fowler (N4VKF at COMCAST dot NET) have stepped up to assist. Thank you all for your hard work, especially during our communications challenged times.

++Section Youth Coordinator++

**To All Scouts, Scout Leaders, and Amateur Radio Enthusiasts:  
Subject: Strategic Preparation for Jamboree-on-the-Air (JOTA) and Jamboree-on-the-Internet (JOTI) – October 18-20, 2024**

Dear Scouts, Scout Leaders, and Amateur Radio Enthusiasts,

I am reaching out as the Virginia Section Youth Coordinator of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) to discuss the upcoming Jamboree-on-the-Air (JOTA) and Jamboree-on-the-Internet (JOTI). This event is scheduled from October 18th to 20th, 2024. You can participate for one day or multiple days, depending on your preference. These platforms not only bridge geographical distances but also foster an exchange of knowledge and cultural insights among Scouts worldwide through Amateur Radio and the Internet.

**Enhanced Preparation for Maximum Engagement:** To ensure the success of these events, thorough preparation is crucial. We are initiating several preparatory measures, and I strongly encourage participation in these efforts:

1. **Comprehensive Planning Guides and Resources:**

- The **K2BSA JOTA Countdown Calendar** is available at K2BSA JOTA Countdown, providing a detailed monthly planning guide from January through October.
  - For general information and downloadable resources, including patches, QSL cards, and activity ideas, please visit [Scouting.org](https://www.scouting.org)'s JOTA page.
- 2. Radio Merit Badge Workshops:**
- As a prelude to JOTA, it is advisable that we begin preparing to provide the series of Radio Merit Badge workshops designed to equip Scouts with essential communication skills required for effective participation. These workshops will cover the basics of radio technology, operation, and safety, ensuring that Scouts are well-prepared. Typically, these classes culminate on JOTA /JOTA with the final skill application.
- 3. Local Amateur Radio Club Collaboration:**
- Effective partnerships between Scout units and local amateur radio clubs are essential for enriching the JOTA/JOTI experience. You can locate nearby clubs through the ARRL Club Finder. Early engagement with these clubs will facilitate the setup of radio stations and ensure technical support is in place.

**Collaboration with Local Amateur Radio Clubs:** Collaboration between local Scout units and amateur radio clubs is vital. To facilitate this, I recommend reaching out to clubs in your area early in the planning process. You can find a club near you through the ARRL Club Finder at [www.arrl.org/find-a-club](http://www.arrl.org/find-a-club).

**Support from the Section Youth Coordinator:** McKenzie Denton, our dedicated Virginia Section Youth Coordinator, can assist with your participation in JOTA/JOTI. She will help coordinate activities, offer support, and ensure that your experience is both educational and enjoyable.

**Contact Information for Participation:**

- McKenzie Denton, Virginia Section Youth Coordinator
- Email: [KO4GLN@arrl.net](mailto:KO4GLN@arrl.net)
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Please mark your calendars for this significant event, and begin your preparations early to ensure a rewarding experience for all participants. Your proactive involvement will contribute significantly to the success of JOTA/JOTI 2024.

Thank you for your commitment to fostering a spirit of adventure and learning through Scouting and amateur radio. I look forward to witnessing the fruits of our collaborative efforts in October.

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

Ed Gibbs KW4GF is still available to present GOTA For Life to clubs or club officers at their meetings via ZOOM. Ed recently spoke with the Chesapeake Amateur Radio Service's BOD. The presentation lasts about 30 minutes. Please contact Ed at [beachteach15@yahoo.com](mailto:beachteach15@yahoo.com).

I highly encourage your clubs or ARES units to get with Ed to go over this information. There are a lot of valuable tips that can help you recruit and retain members, and keep them active, from the time they are first licensed until they become silent keys.

+++Skywarn+++

++++Baltimore/Washington Report++++

As I write this, Hurricane Debby has been downgraded to a Tropical Storm with 50 mph winds. Its eye was located on the Florida-Georgia border but it is huge, reaching almost to the North Carolina-South Carolina border along the coast. This storm is dumping huge amounts of rain, causing flooding and flash flooding as far away as Charleston, SC, where some areas have cars almost completely submerged. The combination of its size, the amount of moisture in the air and how slowly it is moving can bring some areas over 30 inches of rain.

Debby's projected path takes it up the Atlantic coast and into east central North Carolina before speeding up and moving through southeastern Virginia and the Delmarva peninsula. Significant rainfall is expected and the NWS will need reports of rainfall amounts and flooding.

We had a table set up at the Berryville Hamfest. This is one of the larger hamfests in the area with a huge tailgating section. We had hams from all over Virginia and Maryland and even some from Pennsylvania. The number of hams interested in SKYWARN was encouraging.

The Baltimore/Washington NWS office is holding a SKYWARN Basics class on Wednesday, August 28th from 6PM to 8PM in Verona, Va (Augusta County).

This class discusses severe thunderstorm and tornado evolution, how to recognize them and what the NWS needs from spotters. While the target audience for this course people in the Baltimore/Washington NWS coverage area, everyone is welcome. As with all NWS courses, there is no charge but registration is required. To register go to <https://weather.gov/washington/skywarn>.

Finally, we are entering the busy part of the Hurricane season with September and October being the most active. As this is also expected to be a near record breaking season for hurricanes, there's a good chance we will see more. Watch the forecasts, including those from the National Hurricane Center at <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov>. You can also monitor the Hurricane Watch Net on 14.325MHz (daytime) and 7.268MHz. If you don't have HF capabilities, the echolink channel WX-TALK Node 7203.

More information can be found on their website <https://w4ehw.fiu.edu/> or <https://www.nhc.org>.

Until next month, stay alert and stay safe.

Jerry, AI0K

SKYWARN Amateur Radio Coordinator

National Weather Service Baltimore/Washington

Jerry AI0K who volunteers with the Baltimore/Washington NWS Office is recruiting for operators and can assist you in getting information on training in his warning area.

Reach out to him at ai0k AT ai0k DOT net.

+++Hamfests+++

8/10/2024 - Tidewater Hamfest and Swap Meet

Location: Portsmouth, VA

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Tidewater Radio Conventions (Formerly Va Beach Hamfest)

Website: <http://trcihamfest.com>

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

If your club is interested in hosting the 2025 Section Convention, now is the time to submit your application!

+++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)++

Hurricane season is well upon us, and this year Tornado and Flood season has been extra active. ARES operators have an obligation to obtain and maintain their training. When we interact with partner organizations, especially government ones, if we are not trained it appears to them immediately and can put into question our ability to support them. As a bare minimum complete IS-100, Introduction to the Incident Command System; IS-700, An Introduction to the National Incident Management System; and the ARRL Basic Emergency Communications Course (EmComm). These prepare you to know the basic terminology that you will encounter, and also meet the training requirements for the new revision for the Basic level of the ARES Taskbook. I'll be distributing more detailed "how-to" instructions on this via the ARES email reflector.

+++ARES July Report+++

The ARES Monthly Report continues 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 Marty KE4KEW at martinkrupinski AT Gmail dot COM. Remember, each hour is equivalent to our partner organizations spending \$33.38 in training an operator, and of course we provide the equipment as well, saving them even more.

### +++ARES Leadership Updates+++

I have not been able to update some pending appointments to the Field Appointments Database due to some personnel absences at HQ, the systems outage, and my personal disaster deployment. I have a list that I will be working on this coming week as I return home, and will publish that as a "special edition".

Also, as you complete your ARES Position Task Books to Basic, Intermediate, or Advanced, let us know so we can get that information out as well. And keep an eye out for the updated Training Task Book. The levels have been renamed to better represent the level of training completed, and eliminate the confusion caused by the backwards numbering compared to the National Qualification System (NQS) standard, which places Level 1 as the highest level.

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

We just completed a round of real-world conversations with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and the Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VA VOAD) in response to Tropical Storm Debby. We were asked to poll our Emergency Coordinators (ECs) to determine our readiness status and to make sure that we had good up-to-date contact information for everyone. While we had some issues, it was reassuring to get some very positive responses from the field and VDEM and the VOAD were very appreciative of our work. Although we were not needed, this proved to be a very valuable experience. We will be working with our ECs to get those gaps filled and keep working to get our coordination stronger. The hard work everyone has done for the past few years is really paying off. Thank you!

### +++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.

Steve KN4AOB, EC for Greene County works very closely with Greene County Office of Emergency Services, and began working on this year's Simulated Emergency Test (SET) as soon as they completed last year's. They're looking to make this into a District 2 event, and have requested that any groups looking to participate please let them know of what dates they're currently viewing. Traditionally the SET is the first full weekend in October (5 and 6 this year), but we realize that other groups may already have committed to other exercises near that time. Please let me and Steve know what you think would be good timing for you. Steve can be reached at s388bow AT gmail DOT com. If you're in another district and want to participate, chime in as well! I'll be reaching out to the VA VOAD and VDEM to get as much participation as possible from them as well.

++Section Traffic Manager++  
Va Section Traffic News

Station Activity Report (SAR) and Public Service Honor Roll (PSHR) Reports for July 2024

KK4PUX – SAR -38, PSHR – 210

N3SW – SAR- 51 - PSHR – 90

W4CAC – SAR – 21, PSHR – 99

Net Reports for July

Va Sideband Net – QTC – 29/23, QND - 148, QNI – 128, Sessions - 29

VN – QTC- 29 , QND - 268, QNI - 103, Sessions - 28

Ports ARC - QTC – 0, QND-51, QNI – 31, Sessions – 5

NVTN – QTC – 1/1, QND – 811, QNI – 556, Sessions - 26

Floyd ARS - QTC-0, QND- 67, QNI-16, Sessions – 5

South Central Va ARES – QTC – 0, QND – 114, QNI – 28, Sessions – 4

Metro Richmond ARES Net – QTC – 0, QND – 169, QNI – 59, Sessions - 4

The HF nets have continued to experience poor band conditions this month. I have also been told that for those that search the static on the bands that you will occasionally be able to make some great DX contacts!

Hope to see you on the nets.

73, Carl, W4CAC, [w4cac@cox.net](mailto:w4cac@cox.net)

++Section Manager Close-out++

Hurricane Camille was 55 years ago, and there are few people in Virginia who were old enough to really appreciate it that are still with us today. Those few though will tell you of what the Commonwealth went through. Today, the need for amateur radio in the wake of events like that is more important than before. Our nation expects to have communication at their fingertips, quite literally, and when that isn't possible, they will take great risks to try and get connected to the outside world. We are that bridge, if done right. The ARRL has registered the trademark "When all else fails", which is still true. But more importantly, "When all else fails", we can not. Even if you have no interest in emergency communications, be that advocate for the amateur radio service. Support those who do perform that service, whether it be by teaching them valuable skills such as how to work with man-made interference (QRM), portable operations such as Parks On The Air (POTA), or how to build antennas. Even bringing water to an operator at a shelter location or swapping out dead batteries for charged ones is a valuable service. Find a way to contribute and advocate for the service.

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

73,

Jack KE4LWT