

Virginia Section of the ARRL September Section Manager's Report (Covering August)  
++Safety Note++

Season changes mean unpredictable weather conditions. And of course, this time of year we also have the threat of tropical storms. Hurricane, later Tropical Storm Debby brought heavy rains and flash flooding to the state, and we have a veritable conga-line of storms out in the Atlantic. Always keep an eye on the weather and have a plan for what to do. Make sure your family is part of the plan, including your furry (and scaly!) family members. Research your County/Independent City's evacuation plan, sheltering plan, and companion animal plan. And of course, have your own plan.

++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.

+++State of the Amateur Radio Service+++

**The State of the Hobby.** In 2023, many of the 70 ARRL Affiliated Clubs in the Commonwealth conducted monthly or quarterly VE sessions, and about 600 new hams were minted across the Commonwealth. Compare that to in 2023, FCC cancelled licenses for about 250 Hams in Virginia. The net growth in the hobby in Virginia in 2023 was over 350 Hams, and Virginia has reported a year-over-year net growth in the state of the hobby since 2006. That is the good news. This net gain could easily become a net loss. In 2023, over 500 hams lost their privilege to operate – as their licenses were expired (yet not cancelled). History has it that some will renew their license before the two-year grace period expired, but others will not. These Hams – with expired radio licenses -- live in your neighborhood, and you may not even know who they are. Hams in the 'hood can be found by going to: <https://haminfo.tetranz.com/map> Imagine if each of the 5,500 ARRL members in Virginia reached out one inactive Ham, and helped them to become radioactive again? Stop by their house in the neighborhood and say hello or drop off a QSL card and invite them to a Club meeting or special operating event to help them reexplore the hobby. Better yet, make this a Club initiative, and Good Luck!

+++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++

+++Youth Discord Server+++

### **New Virginia ARRL Youth Discord Server!**

Hello Virginia ARRL Members,

We're excited to announce the launch of a new Discord server for our youth members! This platform is divided into sections for those under 18 and those 18 and older, providing a customized space for all age groups to discuss and share their passion for amateur radio.

Discord is a dynamic group chat platform perfect for fostering community and collaboration among amateur radio enthusiasts. To ensure a safe and respectful environment, we have established rules, which are detailed in the condition of use in the sign-up process.

Are you ready to connect with fellow youth amateur radio operators across Virginia?

Join us now:

Youth Under 18: <https://discord.gg/S849wgrKhC>

Youth 18 and Older: <https://discord.gg/xWrYMuqkbH>

See you there!

+++Jamboree On The Air (JOTA)+++

**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'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)

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.

++Upcoming Events++

++ 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++++

August hasn't been overly busy as far as SKYWARN goes, but we have had some severe weather. Many reports were sent from nets all over the Baltimore/Washington NWS coverage area, resulting in warnings being issued. The NWS is very grateful for these reports.

September 1st is the beginning of meteorological autumn and the beginning of the most active part of the hurricane season. The Atlantic has been fairly quiet for the last couple

of weeks but is showing signs of waking up. Now is the time to ensure you are ready should a hurricane come up this way.

The most dangerous threat is flooding, especially along the coast but even inland heavy rains can push rivers out of their banks and flood roads. More people die from floods each year than any other weather phenomenon, most of them in vehicles trying to cross flooded roads. It only takes a few inches of water to float a car off the road. Even if you have driven a road hundreds of times and think you know it, the road may have been washed out. A good rule is if the water is too deep for you to see the pavement, stop and turn around.

The next most dangerous threat, of course, is the wind. Both straight line winds and tornadoes can cause significant destruction, blowing down trees and taking out power lines. Have a backup plan should you lose power - either your own generator or a shelter you can make it to. And remember roads may be blocked and impassable. Should a dangerous hurricane be headed towards the DC area we will activate WX4LWX at the NWS office and active on both VHF (Bluemont 147.300 MHz repeater) and HF (14.325 MHz Hurricane Watch Net). If you don't have HF capability you can pass your report on the WX4LWX, either directly or through your SKYWARN Subnet Coordinator and we will pass it on to both the Baltimore/Washington NWS office and the National Hurricane Center.

The National Weather Service held a Basics class in Verona, Va. (Augusta County) on Wednesday, August 28th. This class was very well attended, with the majority of the class being hams. I'm very happy to see this great turnout. At this time the NWS has two additional Basics classes in Maryland scheduled, on September 24th in Hagerstown (Washington County) and October 9th in McHenry (Garrett County).

Everyone is welcome to attend these free classes -

see <https://www.weather.gov/washington/skywarn> to sign up. The same page will have additional classes as they are scheduled.

All of our nets can use additional net control stations. The position isn't hard - but it is very important. If you are interested, please contact your Subnet Coordinator. You can find your subnet at <https://wx4lwx.us/Frequencies.php> and your coordinator at <https://wx4lwx.us/leadership.php>.

That's all for this month. Enjoy the cooler weather that is coming 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+++

There are currently no hamfests identified for the remainder of the year or for 2025. If your club is interested in hosting the 2025 Section Convention, now is the time to submit your application!

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)++

Marty KE4KEW and Brendan KM4HRR worked hard during the early coordination of ARES operations with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and the Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VA VOAD). While a few Counties/Independent Cities stood up their Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs), no activation of ARES was requested due to the rapid deterioration of the storm system. However, we learned a lot from this and will be working on ways to improve our systems. Stand by for more!

+++ARES August 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. For those who obtain Advanced Level, we'd like to recognize you and also send you some swag.

+++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 August 2024

KK4PUX – SAR -40, PSHR – 210  
N3SW – SAR- 34 - PSHR – 84  
W4CAC – SAR – 35, PSHR –125

Net Reports for August

Va Sideband Net – QTC – 20/14, QND - 152, QNI – 105, Sessions - 31  
VN – QTC- 26 , QND - 236, QNI - 91, Sessions - 28  
Ports ARC - QTC – 0, QND-39, QNI – 21, Sessions – 4  
NVTN – QTC – , QND – , QNI – , Sessions -  
Floyd ARS - QTC-0, QND- 63, QNI-19, Sessions – 4  
South Central Va ARES – QTC – 0, QND – 72, QNI – 30, Sessions – 4  
Metro Richmond ARES Net – QTC – 0, QND – 222 QNI – 74, Sessions - 5

The HF nets still have poor band conditions this month, but they do seem to be gradually getting better. Hope to see you on the nets.

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

++Section Manager Close-out++

I'm working on a response to two different disasters and a third is literally out my window. Tropical Storm Francine is expected to strengthen to a hurricane in the next few hours, and of course the rain it brings are a major issue. We in Virginia have dodged the bullet several times, but our luck will run out. Have a plan, and be ready to take care of yourself, your family, and your extended families. Hurricanes don't sneak up on people, but accidents do. Carbon Monoxide is one of the biggest killers after hurricanes, winter storms, and just general power losses. The next is clean-up related injuries. Chain saws, falls from ladders, and nail-guns are all frequently cited as the reason for Emergency Room visits. We as amateur radio operators are around most of those, and also putting antennas up too close to power lines.

There are some projects that I've had to put on the back burner for a while, but will be dragging back out. There are a lot of things that was as an organization need

assistance with, and we also need to recruit younger people to become hams. I have some ideas on how we can merge those and will putting out feelers to you over the next few months. Keep an eye out!

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

73,

Jack KE4LWT