

East of VA I-95 Amateur Radio News

Mid-
October, 2026

A RECENT SUCCESS

Clubs in Virginia have been receptive to communicating with ARRL VA Section officers to

better organize the ARRL Virginia Section.

Keep in touch!

Ed Gibbs KW4GF

Assistant Section Manager

ARRL VA Section

Email: beachteach15 at
vharc.com

DEAR EAST OF I-95 CLUB OFFICERS AND CLUB MEMBERS,

I hope this newsletter finds you, your family, friends, and club members in peace and health. It has been a busy two-month period.

Just last week, Terry KA8TNF and I spoke to the South Peninsula Amateur Radio Club. Combined with the Peninsula Amateur Radio Club that I have spoken to recently, these clubs and the Hampton Public Service Team are always busy.

Look for the WAARC 's Yorktown Special Event this weekend, October 17,2026, to commemorate the United States' victory over England (with France's help) to end the American Revolution. If you have a chance, check out CARS' Shenanigans Group page. This is an active group within CARS that travel for POTA activations and for those who cannot travel, there are local POTA opportunities. Find this page at: [Shenandoah Shenanigans — Chesapeake Amateur Radio](#)

[Service](#). Check out CARS Facebook page for great videos of their outings. The group just accomplished 1,000 QSOs in 24 hours in POTA experience.

I attended Logwood University's STEM Conference on October 9,2026 in Farmville VA. What a great experience meeting educators and talking up the ARRL Teacher Institute on Wireless Technology. The vendor's boot was well attended and twelve educators (10% of the total attending the conference)



Tap here to add a caption

attended the presentation and asked great questions. As a retired former elementary school educator, I had fun talking the teacher talk.

Send me information and pictures about your club. I always enjoy learning about your clubs' ventures.

73,

Ed KW4GF

RASON : Making An Offer A New Member Can't Refuse

**Join ARRL through RASON and receive TWO YEARS FREE Basic
RASON Membership**

**Renew ARRL Membership through RASON for an additional One-
Year FREE Basic RASON Membership**

A colorful poster for the MPARC HAMFEST. At the top, it says "come to the" in small yellow letters, followed by "MPARC HAMFEST" in large, bold, yellow letters with a black outline. Below that, it says "in Gloucester Virginia" in yellow. The background features a sunset over a beach with waves. On the left, it says "Saturday, February 6, 2027", "9:00 AM - 4:00 PM", and "Gloucester Moose Lodge" in yellow. On the right, it says "Talk in 145.37 PL100" in yellow. In the center, there is a blue crab with a speech bubble that says "Rusty". To the right of the crab is a wooden cart on wheels filled with ham radio equipment, including two radios with call signs "145.370" and "145.370". The cart has a logo that says "MPARC MIDDLE PENINSULA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB" and "Gloucester, VA". At the bottom left, it says "WWW.MPARC.NET" and "WWW.MPARCHAMFEST.COM" in yellow. At the bottom right, it says "COME WITH STASH... LEAVE WITH CASH!" in yellow.

Section Manager's Newsletter

To all Virginia ARRL Members

Subject: October 2026 Section Newsletter

The Spark! Does your Amateur Radio origin story begin with a Scouting event learning Morse Code? Or building a simple crystal diode AM broadcast radio at a scout meeting? If so, you probably got the spark at an early age. The excitement of building something from discrete components or communicating with a simple code oscillator might have turned into an Amateur Radio license at an early age ... or the spark smoldered until later in life. Regardless, we hope you are having fun with Amateur Radio and say thanks the many mentors – far and near.

I raised my scouting origins, as Scouts from around the world are hosting the Jamboree on the Air (JOTA) operating event on 17-18 Oct 2026. The scouts are looking for you! There are no official hours, so you have the whole weekend to make JOTA contacts. Have your origin story ready to share. Contact your local Scout council and see what may already be planned in your area and how you can help. More about JOTA at: <https://www.scouting.org/international/jota-joti/jota/> You can find a nearby council at: <https://www.scouting.org/about/local-council-locator/> Also see: <https://www.arrl.org/jamboree-on-the-air-jota>

Another youth-oriented event this month is the Collegiate QSO Party on 3-4 Oct 2026. Over 1,000 youth (of all ages) are ARRL members, and they are our next generation. They have Spark! Take the time to reach out to them on the air. More about the QSO Party at: <https://collegiateqsoparty.com/> and ARRL's Collegiate program at <https://www.arrl.org/collegiate-amateur-radio>

ARRL is a member of [Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster \(VOAD\)](#); likewise, the Virginia Section is a member of the VA VOAD. VOAD members work together to foster coordinated delivery of services to communities affected by disasters. Other VOAD members include the American Red Cross, Salvation Army and more technical organizations like the IT Disaster Resource Center. Besides assisting with ARES, Amateur Radio Operators may participate with these other VOAD members.

Highlights from visiting Newington. I attended the new Section Manager orientation class last month and walked away with lots of great ideas on how to better serve the 4,000 plus ARRL members in Virginia. If you are looking for a ready source of how ARRL has supported the hobby, take a quick read of pages 10 thru 19 of the latest ARRL Annual Report, and then skip to the Financial Summary on pages 40-41. The full report can be downloaded

at: <https://www.arrl.org/files/file/About%20ARRL/Annual%20Reports/2025%20ARRL%20Annual%20Report.pdf> Suffice to say, ARRL is committed to meeting its mission objectives via member-centric programs. More to follow.

Still looking for volunteers to operate their home station as W1AW/4 during our week working the American250 event in 3-10 Nov 2026. Sign up at the following

site: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1MBHu7SIYThoNJVngq7AmnXs2OJ9-0feRF4Kvc-AG3rw/edit?usp=sharing>

73

Mike Aimone, WA8AHZ

ARRL VA Section Manager

ED KW4GF at Longwood University's STEM Conference



I totally enjoyed speaking with educators about the Teacher Institute on Wireless Technology.

If fact on my way to Farmville, I stopped off in Richmond and met with Bob KC40WJ of the Goochland Amateur Radio Team, and he wanted brochures for his XYL who is on Goochland County's

School Board and for Goochland's Superintendent. Spread the word and let me know how I can assist you to encourage Virginia's educators to attend the TIWT.

What's going on in Fauquier? It's in QST!

4-H HAM RADIO CLUB YOUTH "LEARN BY DOING"

Foxhunting, shortwave-listening bingo, and ham-themed escape rooms are some of the activities teaching members of a Virginia 4-H club all about amateur radio.

Nic Wall, KY4OP

When people think of 4-H, they often think of youth showing their livestock at the county fair, but across the US there are millions of 4-H youth participating in clubs focused on not only agriculture, but also civic engagement, healthy living, and STEM. Within 4-H STEM programs, projects include food science, aerospace, energy, robotics, and ham radio, among others. One of these 4-H ham radio clubs is in Fauquier County, Virginia, and operates as N4HKZ, "4-H Kidz."

LEARN BY DOING

For the Fauquier County 4-H Ham Radio Club, the primary goal isn't getting kids licensed; however, once members start seeing what they can do with a ham license, many end up setting personal project goals to get their ticket. Instead, the club's primary goal aligns with 4-H's slogan: "Learn by doing." Ham radio provides a unique way to learn, build, and experiment across the radio frequency spectrum. It is one of the few places where it's not only okay to build or take something apart and see how it works, but also

encouraged. From long-distance HF radio propagation to digital RF modes ranging from MHz to GHz, ham radio provides young people with a license to learn.

The youth-led club was chartered in 2021 to give members ages 9 – 18 opportunities to explore science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) through amateur radio communications and related electronics projects. All officer positions — from president, treasurer, and secretary to the club call license trustee — are held by youth. Within 4-H clubs, this

is the norm and plays a key role in helping young people develop leadership skills. This structure gives members a sense of ownership and empowers them to shape the club's activities around their current interests in ham radio.

In the club's experience, there is no single "golden" activity that sparks a youth's interest in ham radio. Just like adult hams, each member comes in with different motivations and areas of curiosity. As they explore and operate within the hobby, their interests evolve, leading

them to discover new aspects of amateur radio that further engage them.

Each September, the youth leaders of the club plan out hands-on activities for the upcoming year. They start by brainstorming ideas and displaying them on a visual voting board. The activities with the highest number of votes become the focus of club meetings throughout the year, ensuring that the chosen topics align with members' current interests.

More traditional ham activities have included foxhunting, Parks on the Air® (POTA®), Summits on the Air (SOTA), and the occasional contest. Foxhunting is a favorite of the club, and the tape-measure Yagis the club members built are guaranteed to get pulled out for at least one foxhunt every year. POTA and SOTA provide a way for the youth to draw a pileup and have fun-on-the-air

in a short window of time, so those activities end up at the top of the list most years, too. ARRL Field Day, the Virginia QSO Party, and ARRL's School Club Roundup also are favorite times for the club youth to get on the air.

Beyond these traditional on-air activities, the club also engages in

a variety of hands-on activities that

Fauquier County 4-H Ham Radio Club youth and Nic Wall, KY4OP, in the club's mobile youth station at ARRL Field Day 2022.



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4-H youth complete the final task of their escape room, sending their grid square via CW.

explore the broader aspects of radio and technology. Multiple hands-on activities that don't require youth to get on the radio are also picked during their planning every year. This allows them to explore STEAM topics that are tangential to ham radio, and is



a great way to engage youth who might not be as interested in making contacts or have mic fright.

ADS-B AND AIR BAND

Many ham radios include air band receive capabilities to listen to aircraft and air traffic control communications. Pair that with an inexpensive RTL-SDR (soft-ware-defined radio) and a program like *SDRangel* to identify and map aircraft flying overhead based on

their Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) transmissions. The 4-H youth had a great time with this activity, trying to track an aircraft via ADS-B and then seeing if they could hear it on the air band or even see it fly overhead. The club had additional aid of a local ham and commercial airline pilot, who helped them find good frequencies for the area and explained what was being said on the radio.

PHYSICS EXPERIMENTS

There are numerous physics experiment demonstrations out there covering electromagnetism and other ham-related principles that make great teaching tools. Three that the 4-H club have done include a modern take on Hertz's electromagnetic waves experiment, a demonstration of Lenz's Law, and a mutual induction demonstration. The youth teamed up to build each of the projects, then presented them to the rest of the club and explained the physics principles behind them. The demonstrations also make great show-and-tell items at public outreach events, like the club's ARRL Field Day Get on the Air station.

4-H member Marie, with the help of her dad Garth, K4BOX, making some of her first radio contacts during ARRL Field Day from the N4HKZ mobile youth station.

SHORTWAVE-LISTENING BINGO

There's a whole world of radio transmissions out there in the ham bands and beyond, and SDRs make it easy to dial around a huge swath of the RF spectrum and listen to and decode those transmissions. Projects like KiwiSDR make this even easier by allowing the public to host their SDRs on the internet, so you don't even need to have an SDR and antenna. That's great for clubs or classrooms where it might be cost- and space-prohibitive to give each kid an SDR. The 4-H club gamed shortwave listening with bingo. Youth are given a bingo card with various things they might find tuning around on the SDR and compete to be the first individual or team to win bingo. A basic understanding of modulation types and modes they might come

4-H youth Bri, KO4NLR, and Oscar, KO4ZKY, take a break from a 4-H state competition to do a POTA activation inside Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest.



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▶ Guides for the club's escape rooms and other activities, as well as ham radio presentations, are shared for free under Creative Commons license at <https://sites.google.com/vt.edu/ham-radio/resources>.

across and how to identify and decode them in the SDR is a must, but it doesn't take long before they're off and playing.

HAM-THEMED ESCAPE ROOMS

What started as an idea in the 4-H club's annual planning meeting has become a yearly tradition for the club and was even shared with visitors to the ARRL Youth booth at Hamvention. Many of the 4-H youth in the club, especially the middle and high schoolers, enjoy escape rooms. You can find lots of escape room plans for clubs and classrooms on the internet for free or for a modest fee on sites like www.teacherspayteachers.com. The 4-H club couldn't find any ham radio-themed ones, though, so they made their own. "Rescue Aboard the Wouff-Hong" has players use Morse code to solve puzzles on a stranded research ship to find their location and send it to the rescue team so they can escape. "Around the World in Holidays" combines ham radio with geography and world holidays to teach what people celebrate around the world near the end of the year. The latest escape room, "EMCOMM Me Some Food," introduces ham programs like ARES®, SKYWARN®, the National Traffic System®, and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service. It has players sending and receiving radio communication to coordinate getting their food supplies (the club's drinks and snacks for that meeting).

All photos are provided by the author.

Nic Wall, KY4OP, was first licensed as KO4IUM in October 2020, upgraded to General in December of that year, and earned his Amateur Extra-class license in 2022. Based in Brightwood, Virginia, he enjoys experimenting with digital modes, satellites, and portable operations like SOTA/POTA. As a volunteer adult leader for the Fauquier County 4-H Ham Radio Club, N4HKZ, he is dedicated to introducing youth to amateur radio. Nic can be reached at ky4op@arrl.net.

Q&A with the Young Club Members

What has been your favorite activity the 4-H Ham Radio Club has done?

Anything being outside doing ham radio. — Oscar, KO4ZKY

The Morse code hangman game we came up with as a club. — Kieran

Our SOTAs and foxhunts. — Bri, KO4NLR

What is different about the 4-H youth ham radio club compared to other ham radio clubs you are a part of?

We have a lot of say about what we're doing and activities we do each year. — Oscar, KO4ZKY

There's more variety in activities. — Bri, KO4NLR

What is something you've learned in your time in the club?

Everything about ham radio. I came in with no license and have learned everything in the club along the way.

— Oscar, KO4ZKY

I learned about people launching radio balloons and am looking forward to launching our club pico balloons later this year. — Lincoln

Morse code and the basics of how radios and antennas work. — Kieran

Different foxhunting methods and the benefits of having 2 meters and 70 centimeters for hunting. — Bri, KO4NLR

What is your recommendation to older hams to attract more youth to ham radio?

Look at both traditional radio and newer technologies and modes. I like to say "FT8 is ham radio for intro-verts." — Bri, KO4NLR

Youth like playing games, and adding games to ham

radio is fun. — Lincoln

Soldering and making stuff is also part of ham radio, and I like doing hands-on activities. — Kieran

Do more interactive and varied activities and less one-way presentations. — Oscar, KO4ZKY

What is an activity you've done in this or another ham radio club that you didn't enjoy?

One-way slideshows with no interaction. — Oscar, KO4ZKY

POTAs can be a challenge and not as much fun if you don't have the right equipment. Skip the QRP for youth first starting out. — Bri, KO4NLR

Any other advice for youth ham radio clubs starting out?

Snacks are a must. — Oscar, KO4ZKY Bribe [them] with food. — Bri, KO4NL

Yorktown Special Event October 17

[Will, K4MI Oct 4, 2026](#)

Our last special event for 2026 is the Yorktown Special Event station on October 17. This event commemorates the 245th anniversary of the surrender by General Cornwallis and the British to the combined French and American forces at Yorktown in October 1781.

K4RC will be on the air that day from 10am-about 4PM. We plan to operate on 40m at or around 7.265 MHz, and on 20m at or around 14.265 MHz. Look for K4RC on the spotting networks, as this weekend is typically busy with many other on-the-air activities taking place that day.

If you are in the local area, we will be setting up at Charles E Brown Park on Old Williamsburg Road, across from the main Naval Weapons Station gate in Lackey. We plan to start setting up around 8:30 am so that we can be on the air by 10am.

We also need volunteers to operate and for logging. Come out to the park and we will make sure you have a chance to get on the air.

QSL information as well as information about all three of our annual special event stations can be found on the [Special Event Stations](#) page.

Powhatan Got Set for SET

Powhatan ARES SET 2026

We had 47% of our Powhatan ARES members participate today in the 2026 SET, plus one non ARES participant.

Many lessons learned, and much to improve was documented. More information will be forthcoming in time as it is assimilated and organized.

A big Thank You to all who turned out, and especially to Curt KD4JLY, our AEC for Training and Exercises.

He did a wonderful job, and spent many hours in preparation for this.

It turned out to be a most rewarding and enlightening experience, and the best one I have been involved with. I learned a lot.

Everyone did an outstanding job! Again, thank you all.

Now we plan for 2027.

73,

**Carl Cash KF4UBE
Powhatan ARES
Emergency Coordinator**

Need a license or upgrade? Williamsburg AARC offers this:

The next WAARC open test session opportunity to upgrade or earn a new license will be Saturday, October 24, at 09:00 at the James City-Bruton VFD, 3135 Forge Road in Toano.

All three classes of license tests will be offered. See the WAARC website for additional details.

There is a \$15 test fee (under age 18 is \$5) that covers all your exams at that session. Preferably please provide a check or money order payable to "ARRL-VEC", or cash can be accepted if needed. Also, if you are sitting for a brand-new Technician license, the FCC will want a \$35 license fee to be paid separately to the FCC when your license is ready to be issued. The FCC's fee does not apply to upgrades. Technician candidates should obtain an FRN from the FCC in advance of the test session.

Walk-ins are welcome. However, it would help if you would advise in advance if you plan to attend this session and what class license you will attempt. Send a message via ve@k4rc.net, or pre-register at HamStudy . And as always, pop-up testing on short notice can be arranged whenever someone is ready to take a test.

**73,
Joe
W4YVA**

ACC Report!!

Expiring club FCC license Grants. Do you know when your club station license expires? If not, you can look up the date from QRZ.com or FCC's ULS. We receive monthly lists of expiring license grants – including those of clubs. I usually pass along (when I see a club on the list) a notice of an expiring license. The renewal process is a bit different for a club license – need to fill out a FCC Form 605c and two signatures are required on the form ... the station license trustee and an officer of the club (other than the trustee). The VECs handle the renewal process, you don't submit the form via ULS

ARRL is very efficient in the process of renewing club licenses. Let us know if you need help.

Looking for a speaker for one of your club meetings next year? We'd like to fill out your program "dance card" ... We've billed our talks this year as a "listening session" and we spoke to 10 clubs. Our listening sessions helped develop the Section Strategic Plan. For 2027, we'll focus on how ARRL plays an oversized role in promoting and protecting the hobby. Let us know if you'd like a visit from the Section leadership team.

Speaking of hearing from you To confirm you are receiving these update emails (sent about the 10th of the month), please respond to a simple one question survey at: <https://forms.gle/6umsZAnhHoWKfmLU7>

Schedule of 2027 Hamfest. So far, ARRL has sanctioned two Virginia Hamfests in 2027. We'd like to lock down the dates of all the planned Hamfests for 2027 across the Commonwealth early this year. If you are planning a Hamfest, please consider registering it with ARRL. Details at: <https://www.arrl.org/arrl-sanctioned-events> If you would like to host the Section Convention at your Hamfest, also let us know. In 2026, we attended all seven of the ARRL sectioned Hamfests across the Commonwealth. Our top priority for visits are again to attend all VA Hamfests in 2027.

The end of the year brings forth a number of newly elected (appointed) club officers to the mix. The best way to inform us of your leadership changes is to post the new slate of officers to your club ARRL webpage. You can search for your ARRL club webpage from: <https://www.arrl.org/find-a-club> Contact us if you are having challenges updating the webpage.

**That's all, folks. Please send me club news and pictures for
inclusion in this newsletter!**

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Assistant Section Manager

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