

Greetings from Greene County,

This is my first Section Manager's Report, but to say it is "mine" is not completely accurate. This is your report, and I'm just the one putting it together.

I'd like start by asking everyone to give a special thanks to Carl W4CAC for stepping up to act as Interim Section Manager after the sudden passing of Joe K3WRY. Also, keep Joe's family in your hearts, prayers, and remembrances as they go through what has to be a difficult time.

This past month has been a whirlwind of activity, and I've learned so much from so many of you, and I look forward to continuing this trend.

For example, at the ARRL Section Convention at the Vienna Winterfest there were presentations on a wide variety of topics, including Parks On The Air (POTA), and a particularly interesting section on helping to get new hams and "rusty hams" involved. I encourage you to go to the Vienna Wireless Society's website and review the videos from the event. I think you'll learn at least one or two things from it. During some face-to-face conversations I learned a lot about their "Silent Key" program. I encourage all clubs to have a look at this as well. This is tremendous outreach program that shows how much a club can support a Ham's family even after they have become SKs. You can find more info on that here: <https://viennawireless.net/wp/donations-silent-key-consignments/>

Mike WA8AHZ was appointed as the new ARRL Club Coordinator by Carl, and has been doing a tremendous job with his outreach to the clubs. Club's play an important part in the growth of new Amateur Radio operators. While Hams start in the service by individually taking an exam, they grow in the service by learning from ELMERs. As these new Hams become ELMERs themselves, they even learn more about the service as they teach the fine art of traffic management, antenna installation, and what not to even newer Hams. Every month ARRL sends out a listing of new Hams, and our Affiliated Club Coordinator sends the list to the 65 ARRL affiliated clubs in the Commonwealth. As a Club, take the time to write a letter to a new Ham and welcome him or her to the service. Consider going beyond just sending them a welcome letter – assign a Club member to every new Hams in your region, and invite them to attend your club meetings -- and get them on the air. Did you know that more than 50% of all new Technician class radio operators never get on the air?

For information on where you can point new Hams to so they can find local clubs, there are two resources you can use to graphically show them:

① <https://www.gsl.net/kw4shp/VaEmComm/VaARClubsMap.html> (hosted on [gsl.net](https://www.gsl.net))
Steve KW4SHP maintains this site

② https://emcommwiki.org/index.php?title=Virginia#ARRL%C2%AE_Clubs_in_VA Which is an open platform for sharing information, maintained by its contributors.

③ <http://www.arrlva.com/clubs.php> on the ARRL VA Official Page.

While each one displays in a different manner, they all are pulling their data from the official ARRL data. If that is incorrect, then the club POC should either see that it is updated, or get with Mike WA8AHZ for assistance.

There has been some news from the FCC on the licensing fee. Some not so good, some bad. For new licenses and renewals, there will be a \$35 charge beginning on 2022 April 19. On the bright side, this does not include administrative changes such as address updates, or license upgrades. There are some ARRL programs that affiliated clubs can take advantage of to help with these a bit. Have them contact Mike WA8AHZ for more information.

The United States Forest Service (USFS) rule making comments period just closed regarding the proposed \$1400 annual fee for each communications system install on USFS towers. The ARRL submitted a very good comment on our collective behalf, and you can read more about that here: <https://www.arrl.org/news/view/arrl-seeks-exemption-from-proposed-us-forest-service-communication-facility-fees-comment-period-to-b> To make us more prepared for other issues like this, I'm going to be seeking out folks to help provide supporting documents to filings on behalf of the Virginia Section.

For the first time in many years, I found myself at home with a decent set-up for participating in a contest, and I joined in on the VA QSO Party. I had a lot of fun, even though I was only using my vertical antenna, so I was equally poor in all directions! For next year, I'll be a lot more prepared, and maybe even give a few others a run for their money! Being in Greene County helped a lot in that it's a relatively "rare" county, but that wasn't enough to overcome my technical limitations. But, that's what it's all about. Learn from experiences, good and bad.

The Virginia Beach Amateur Radio Club provided communications support for the Shamrock Festival on the weekend of March 19th and 20th. Terry KA8TNF provided the following report:

"This was the 50th Anniversary running of the Shamrock Marathon in Virginia Beach. It is a 2 day event on Saturday, March 19th, there was an 8K Challenge run, Kids Final Mile (this is where supported schools, run 25 miles during the school year and finish the final mile on the course). Then, on Sunday March 20th, there is a Half Marathon and Full Marathon being ran at the same time (the long day). We, Virginia Beach Public Service Team have been supporting the Shamrock since its start.

Over the years, we have extended our reach for volunteers to Clubs in the Hampton Roads area. 65+ hams cover the following area, Start, Each Mile Marker (26), Water Stops (8) and First Aide stations(2), Medical (1), City Command, Shamrock Command, Runner Pickup Vehicles (2), Last Runner (1) Picking up Mile Markers, sand bags, and other equipment that may be there to pick up...Folks were ready to have a great run, weather held out and was a beautiful day for a run."

Well done! 50 years of public service on the same event speaks volume to the value of our collective public service! And Terry wanted to especially recognize AI WA4TCJ for 40 years of supporting this event.

Also in the same part of VA, members of the Chesapeake Amateur Radio Service Club (CARS) received the Civilian Excellence in Virginia Fire Service Award. Congratulations to Dennis Watson, K4DGW, Van Rowe, KM4KBS, Mike Tromba, WM4ST, John Cooper, N3JC, Bill Mellema, N3WM, and John Fitzgerald, KX4GI. And thank you Terry for sharing that information.

I was able to meet briefly with the good folks from Chesterfield and participate in their Monday night ARES training net from Windy Hill. Or should I say "Cold and Windy Hill"! They are certainly a dedicated bunch, as that evening the winds were howling and the temperature was below freezing. A special thanks to David KN4LQN and Steve KX4EF for their invite and hospitality.

On the public service side, I have been engaging with some of our state-wide partners, and they have expressed that the need is there for amateur radio, and have also expressed a need for more availability of certain kinds of resources that we do have the capability to provide. Among this is digital messaging, and even ARL Radiograms for disaster survivors. I was told that the Radiogram ability would have been of great help during the recent flooding events where survivors needed to be able to send health and welfare traffic to their friends and families.

I invite all amateur radio operators to go to <https://www.emcommwiki.org> and have a look around. This is a collaborative tool where we can share best practices and tools. That way, once a product is developed, such as an exercise plan, emergency operations plan, silent key program, public service event, etc., it can be shared and others can then use it as a template, saving them time and using your experiences to prevent them from repeating any pitfalls. You can also go straight to the Virginia specific entry page here: <https://emcommwiki.org/index.php?title=Virginia> And as always, the ARRLVA.COM page remains our official page.

I hope to hear you on the air, or see you in person soon.

73

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