

ARC-SHORTS

October, 2013

Club Repeaters: 147.315 (PL 107.2), 444.6 (PL107.2), 224.82 (PL107.2), 53.13 (PL107.2) Down for replacement, 927.6 (-25Mhz, PL107.2), and 1282.600 (PL 107.2), DSTAR 145.38Mhz, 442.060, and 1284.600

NEXT CLUB MEETING

Our next meeting is **OCTOBER 11th** at the Alexandria City's Emergency Operations Center at 3600 Wheeler Ave. We will meet in the Community Room on the first floor. Parking is the public lot right in front of the building.

This month's program will be from Tom Dundzila KK4NMP. His topic will cover how amateur radio is used in Australia to support education.

We will also have a short discussion on how ARES can best support our community.

DINNER before the meeting is usually an informal get together at Atlantis Restaurant. As we need to start the meeting at 7PM we usually start gathering at the restaurant about 5:30 plus / minus.

SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES

ARC Meeting, was held on September 13th. Our guest speaker was Ed Bradshaw, W4EDF. Ed gave an introduction to sound card driven digital communications systems. Including PSK-31, JT-64 and MT-63. Part of the discussion that followed touched on the application of these modes to provide ARES communications and the use of FLDIGI and Ham Radio Deluxe. Packet was not discussed but as computers get more powerful the need for external Terminal Node Controllers may one day be a thing of history.

Meeting called to order by President, Tom, KJ4FUU

Nineteen Members and 5 guests were in attendance. Ed, W4EDF provided a Digital Modes presentation. It included a discussion of several different digital signal formats and software for viewing and manipulating the digital information.

Treasurer's report:

- Basic Checking: \$466.70
- Communications Trailer: \$855.18
- Education Fund: \$2311.93
- Regular Shares: \$5224.21
- Total Deposit Accounts: \$8,858.02

Secretary's Report: 50 members currently in club

Committees:

Education – KA4GFY. On track for conducting a course on October 1st. We have plenty of books now. There was a run on books prior to the last class as other clubs were buying them out early.

Repeater – K4GOR. No change

Trailer – KA4GFY. The committee has pretty much settled on a 30 amp supply. Rich would like to delete the third position in the trailer as it gets too cramped and noisy when full. Still working the optimum battery mix.

DSTAR – KI4MWP. The repeater has a new gateway computer with one terabyte of storage. Previous machine was hanging frequently and required a trip each time to reset it. New users are being added – about two users per week. The Towson DStar site recently got internet access. Richmond will be adding 1.2 Ghz capability.

Webmaster – K4AXQ. Newsletter is posted. Elmer's presentations were added. Capability for handling renewals on line could be added. Could also add a page to raise additional funds via the W4HFH webpage.

ARES – N4ASX. Gary Sessums working with National Airport on a disaster drill for Saturday, Sep 21st. This event occurs every three years as mandated by the FAA to retain airport certification. Alexandria Radio Club volunteers will be monitoring patient movements at INOVA Alexandria Hospital and keeping track of each patient via Triage tags (actor numbers). Black = deceased, Red = critical, Yellow = serious, Green = ambulatory. We will be using a Cross-band repeater to augment club communications. It will be provided by Rick, N4ASX.

Miscellaneous – Craig, K5GOR – Tim would like to sponsor a fox hunt and would like to present particulars in the November club meeting. Re: Christmas Party (Nothing further said on progress).

Don, KI4D and Steve, W8RJH announced a Jamboree on the Air (JOTA) event for Saturday, October 19th from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm in the Gray Mack Pavilion at 12300 Iona Sound Drive, Bristow, Virginia in support of Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Troops 581 and 1372. This will allow scouts to speak to each other via Amateur radio and to obtain the BSA Radio Merit badge.

Net Controls for the next period:

- Sep 19 – KA4GFY
- Sep 26 – N4ASX
- Oct 3 – W4EDF
- Oct 10 – KI4D

New Business – Tom, KJ4FUU read into the meeting record that the Alexandria Radio club received a letter from the Alexandria Police Association on behalf of the Laboy family expressing gratitude for the

ARC donation in support of Officer Peter Laboy's recovery. It was signed by Daniel Gordon, President Alexandria Police Association.

Meeting was adjourned by the President, Tom, KJ4FUU.

73 DE Larry KK4CBL

Future Programs

Our November program will be provided by Tim, KT4MV on methods of Fox (transmitter) hunting. Tim has been a real treat when it comes to good programs. Of course our December program is the annual Christmas party.

Bob Huneycutt W4REH (SK)

Bob was a long time member of the club until he retired and moved to West Virginia. Bob joined the Alexandria Radio Club around 1982 time frame and was active on VHF and the club repeater. Bob was also an active participant in our public service and ARES events.

Bob had worked for the City at one time and later went to work for the Department of Justice in accounting and later moved up to managing the installation of new IT systems in the federal courts.

Bob was always around to support the club and its members and we will miss him.

73 Rick
N4ASX

Wayne Greene N2NSD (SK)

I would not normally put an item like this in our newsletter, but on the net the other night, Rich KA4GFY talked about our meeting Mr. Never Say Die at the Dayton Hamvention in 1986 (I think). Mr. Greene was the publisher of 73 Magazine and that magazine was one of two that I do miss. 73 had a bunch of build it yourself projects and was a bit more 'technical' then QST. I still have the second to last issue as one of our members published an article in that issue. Mr. Greene was on top of technology. He published some of the first home computer magazines back when a home computer was something you built yourself and programmed in simple languages. He published a magazine for the high fidelity crowd as well. He also was forever hammering the ARRL to do a better job. While many of us disagreed with him, ham radio will miss him.

The D-STAR Contest

A Newbie goes to a D-STAR QSO Party by John Hucke KK4RBB

After 50 years of knowing a little about Ham Radio I took the W4HFH Technician License class this Spring and passed element 2 & 3 on May 7, 2013. My license was

issued May 10, 2013. The next week I went to Dayton, a brand new General who didn't own a radio and who hadn't made a call under my own call sign on my own radio.

I'm such a newbie I only own 1 radio, an Icom ID 51A, a dual band, dual mode 2 M/70CM handheld that I bought at Dayton. Except for Field Day I have only worked 2M and 70 CM. As you might imagine the idea of the D-Star QSO Party, even though I didn't really know what to expect, was very interesting.

Here is the official Icom rules:

Purpose

Connecting the world through D-STAR repeaters around the globe.

Prizes

The goal of the D-STAR QSO PARTY is to communicate through as many D-STAR repeaters as possible throughout the world. All operators who submit an approved log will be eligible for the prize draw. 10 winners will be randomly selected to each win a prize. The more D-STAR QSO's you make, the more chances you have to win (up to a maximum of four prize draw tickets). Please refer to the entry multipliers below.

To qualify for a prize draw ticket, you need make a contact through at least one repeater in your own country.

If you contact amateurs in more than 5 foreign countries, you will qualify for two tickets to win a prize.

If you contact amateurs in more than 10 foreign countries, you will qualify for three tickets to win a prize.

If you contact amateurs in more than 20 foreign countries, you will qualify for four tickets to win a prize.

How the above "prize draw ticket" system will work

- 1 The name and/or call sign of each entrant into the D-STAR QSO PARTY will be collated and included in the prize draw. In this case each entrant will be eligible for one prize draw ticket in the draw.
- 2 As per the explanation above, the number of prize draw tickets is multiplied depending on the number of countries outside your own that you receive a valid QSO from during the competition period.

Winners can receive only one prize. Therefore, in the case where a winner's name/call sign is drawn again, that person will not receive another prize.

 Pagetop

I started working the QSO party right after our Thursday 2 M net and continued off and on until the party ended at 2000 local Sunday evening. I contacted stations in 19 countries. I made my US contact on our 2 M D-STAR repeater with a local Ham. The balance of my contacts were on Alexandria G via Reflector 001C.

I attempted to use the gateway repeater function where, according to my ID-51 instructions, you can link with individual D STAR repeaters in other countries. I tried

lining to individual repeaters Australia, New Zealand and Japan with out any success what so ever. I attempted to make contacts via several other reflectors in Europe and Asia but got no replies. I attempted to link to 3 reflectors in Australia but got "reflector currently busy" several times until I decided to return to Ref 001C. Since I was able to link and unlink and relink 145.380 from 025B to 001C many times I have to believe I was using the correct protocols. I really enjoyed the party and while it might not really be "DX" I can tell you the pile up sounded like Field Day trying to get a distant multiplier station. The rush to contact the rare stations like India, Congo,Trinidad, Ireland and Scotland was intense. Brazil, France and Poland popped up, made a single contact then, dropped out, never responding to multiple calls that followed. Countries contacted included Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Indonesia, Congo, Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Germany, Denmark, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Scotland, Ireland, Canada and Trinidad. The operator of the 9Y station in Trinidad seemed to be used to being at the center of a pile up. Seems he has been a Ham for decades and has lots of HF experience. I got much the same impression from the Irish station too. The YL in India is some sort of telecommunications official and promoter of Ham Radio. Lessons learned For next year I'll do two things to increase the number of contact countries. First I'll learn how to implement the gateway repeater process So I can reach into individual repeaters. Secondly I'll be sure to be on the air in the early Saturday AM local time to catch a better portion of the radio day in Russia and Eastern Europe. I had other commitments on Saturday and completely missed any of those folks if they popped up.

In conclusion I think the QSO Party was worth my effort and I will participate again next year. I'd certainly recommend it to any one who like me doesn't have a HF suitable QTH.

If all are verified I have 18 contacts good for 3 tickets in the prize draw. Just 2 more country and I'd have 4 tickets.

73

John KK4RBB

Hamfests –

October 26 – Delmarva Amateur Radio and Electronics Expo, sponsored by the Sussex Technical High School and the Sussex Amateur Radio Association. The location is the Sussex Technical High School in Georgetown DE. It's a fairly short drive from our area. The best way to get there is across the Chesapeake By Bridge and follow US 301 North into Delaware. Talk-in on 147.090 (PL 156.7).

October 26 – Southern Maryland tailgate Fest, sponsored by the Saint Mary's County Amateur Radio Association. The location is the VFW Bingo Hall in Hollywood, MD. Talk-in on 146.640 (PL 146.2).

October 27 – Mason Dixon Hamfest, sponsored by the Carroll County Amateur Radio Club. The location is the Carroll County Agricultural Center in Westminster, MD. It too is a short drive from our area.

Training -

Our latest class started on October 1 with 14 in attendance and 1 more who said they would be there the second week because of a work conflict. We were expecting more, but maybe government furloughs kept people away. Thanks to KI4D's outreach, we picked up a few folks from Fairfax CERT.

Contests

October 12 – Arizona QSO Party. Exchange is the serial number and state.

October 12 – Pennsylvania QSO Party. Exchange is serial number and ARRL Section.

October 19 – Iowa QSO Party. Exchange is RST and state.

October 19 & 20 – New York QSO Party. Exchange is RST and state.

October 19 & 20 – W/VE Islands QSO Party. Exchange is RST and state.

October 20 & 21 – Illinois QSO Party. Exchange is RST and state.

October 26 & 27 – CQ World Wide SSB Contest. Exchange is RS and CQ zone. We are in zone 5.

73,
Rich, KA4GFY

ARES

The Federal Shutdown did have a bright side. Doug, AK4QY was the spark plug for getting work done on the club's comm trailer. Rich, KA4GFY had pulled it up to my QTH and we had planned on some work in order to prepare the trailer for the Marine Corps Marathon. What was accomplished should be called an overhaul.

The old power/antenna connection boxes have been removed. We never used them. A new 60 Amp Astron power supply with battery backup has been installed, the radios have been repositioned and the excess coax cables and leads to nowhere have been removed. The VHF and UHF Motorola radios have been removed as they do not cover the frequencies used for the

Marathon and an old but dependable ICOM IC-2340H has been installed. The 6 meter Alinco with the TNC installed was checked out. Unfortunately the GPS puck that was modified to go with the Alinco has disappeared and another one will have to be procured. The Kenwood TM-D710A was checked out on Packet and APRS and works well with it's GPS puck. When we get the replacement GPS for the 6 meter radio, we will install a raydome on the roof and put the GPS receivers where they can get a signal. Doug also installed the two solar cells that the club purchased from Jim N8OQ. They put out about an amp each at 20 volts and should do well in keeping the two replacement batteries up while the vehicle is stowed.

We still need to procure the two replacement batteries, hook up the leads from the solar cells to the batteries with protection diodes, Clean up the trailer and remove the third office chair. The office chair will be used at the next club ways and means.

Doug and Rich did an outstanding job of overhauling the trailer. One additional item was the door handle that was installed by our scouts. When I tried to open the trailer, it broke, Doug replaced it and we now have a latching door with a strong handle.

73 Rick
N4ASX

73 Rick
N4ASX

Social Events

Monday Night Half Price Burgers – There is a group that gets together at Shooter McGee's (Duke and Paxton Streets) on Monday evenings at 6:15 PM. A good burger and soft drink runs about \$9.00.