

ARC-SHORTS

September 2014

Club Repeaters: 147.315 (PL 107.2), 444.6 (PL107.2), 224.82 (PL107.2), 53.13 (PL107.2) 927.6 (-25Mhz, PL107.2), and 1282.600 (PL 107.2), DSTAR 145.38Mhz, 442.060, and 1284.600 ALL AR UP AND RUNNING – HAM IT UP! Get on the air!

NEXT CLUB MEETING

Our next meeting is October 10, 2014 at 3600 Wheeler Ave. Just off Duke Street in Alexandria about 1 block west of Quaker Lane. We start the meeting at 7PM with our program and follow with a short business meeting.

This month's program will be Bryan Dorbert, N3ST vice president of the Middle Atlantic Repeater Council (T-MARC). Bryan is also the frequency coordinator. In the 1980's it seemed that everyone wanted to put up a repeater and we had problems with one repeater interfering with another. In some cases the FCC got involved. Coordination has always been voluntary, but the FCC now sides with the coordinated repeaters in interference cases.

Dinner prior to the meeting will be at Atlantis (Bradlee shopping center of Rt. 7 just east of 395) with folks starting to gather about 5:30. Our guest speakers get a meal on the club.

SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES

Our September program was provided by Ian, N8IK on the art and science of CW (Morse Code). When CW was mandatory it was quite a challenge to a great many of us. Now that it is no longer required, it has come into it's own as an efficient mode of communications with many advantages for those who can master it.

Club accounts

account	amount
checking	505.02
comm	
trailer	856.02
education	2624.4
paypal	34.66
regular	
share	3528.82
	7548.92

09/12/2014 W4HFH meeting notes:

Call to order at 1900

Introductions

Committees/officer reports

- Treasurer – check XLSX file from treasurer
- Secretary – 21 at last meeting, will be out October
- Repeater – A-OK but for occasional ‘disappearance’ of 2 m repeater
- Trailer – nothing new
- Training – new class begins 9/30
- D-STAR – not present, system working
- Webmaster - out
- ARES – waiting on Greg Bryson & EOC under construction

Upcoming events

- Marine Corps marathon 10/26, volunteers still needed
- Howard County Hamfest 10/5
- 9/27 DC Run to Cure – 1 operator needed

Old business

- nomination committee – full slate ready
- NW3V – 60th anniversary radio event 2nd weekend in November

New business

- N8IK – 2nd Friday in December at Savvio’s at 7 PM, a la carte ordering

Upcoming net controls

9/18 – KA4GFY

9/25 – N8IK

10/2 – N4ASX

10/9 – KI4BXU

Ways and Means by W9TCE

Activity – Learning Morse Code by N8IK

Next meeting on 10/10/2014

Meeting adjourned at 20:40

CLUB ELECTIONS:

The nominating committee has selected (or coerced) the following nominees for next year

For President: Larry KK4CBL

For Vice President: Erik Misavage, KI4BXU

For Treasurer: Ted W9TCE

For Secretary: Jay NW3V

If you were not nominated but wanted one of these positions, or if you have an alternative, please speak up at the next meeting.

We all need to thank our outgoing officers, Tom KK4FUU, Larry KK4CBL, Ted, W9TCE and Eric KI4BXU for their extraordinary work these last two years. Without folks who step up and take the lead, the club would not be worthy of our membership.

President's Corner

As my time as president of the Alexandria Radio Club runs down, so it seems my supply of things to say in this column also shrink. I hope that those taking our current class take advantage of our club and the mentors in it. I would like to see more input from the general membership on their activities and programs that might interest them.

I encourage those who can to take advantage of the public service activities offered by the club. I try every year to help out in the George Washington's Birthday Parade, and it would be easier if the radio operators didn't have to handle multiple divisions (it would also be easier if the parade marshals would all show up too).

The Marine Corps Marathon is another service opportunity where plenty of operators are always needed. So is the Tour de Cure, a walk raising money for a cure of diabetes.

No egregious problems have reached me for comments, so keep up the good work.

73,

-- Tom Kirby KJ4FUU
President, Alexandria Radio Club

ARES

Emergency and public service communications provided by amateur radio use to be a voice only affair. In the 60s and 70's it was hard enough to get portable stations in place and VHF FM was not as common as it is now. With the advent of 2 meter FM handhelds that could be tuned to any frequency, our ability to provide clear voice communications over wide areas became a fact of life. With dual watch and dual band handhelds and mobiles we have been able to monitor two nets and provide a great deal of communications support for a wide variety of events.

With the advent of the internet, more and more of our served agencies are asking for more than just voice communications. Written traffic has become the new desired method even when sent from a disaster site. Why? Because it is a more precise and provides a record of events – Who sent what and who authorized what?

The amateur radio community has developed several modes. One is Packet radio. Developed in the early 1980s as a forward error correcting linked system based on the internet packet protocol X25. The mode is AX-25 and substitutes the IP addresses with the call signs of the sending and receiving station as well as any relay stations. Packet started off at 1200 baud in order to stay within narrow bandwidths. Packet can also be sent at 9600 baud if you have the proper Terminal Node Controller or software. The interface between your computer or terminal and the radio is a Terminal Node Controller or TNC which is it's own computer with a set of commands. Packet was gaining in popularity with hams setting up Bulletin Board Stations to store and forward traffic or to allow sharing of DX spots. With the rapid onset of the internet, the need for BBSs and DX Clusters were rendered OBE. There are lots of TNCs out there not in use. With conventional packet you would CONNECT to the station you wanted to send to and that would establish error corrected link if noise trashed a packet of information your TNC would send again until the receiving station acknowledge correct receipt. Packet could be put into a unprotected or unproto mode so that all could see the traffic. Some would call this conversation mode. A spin off of this is Amateur Position Reporting System APRS developed by Bob Bruninga, WB4APR. Bob applied packet to a system where your GPS position and other info was encoded and could be overlayed on maps. This allowed tracking, as well as situational awareness of an area. Voice repeaters could be identified and those on the APRS frequency could 'see' where as well as what frequency and PL if part of the sent details. APRS comes in with the Marine Corps Marathon as a tracking system, but you can send dedicated traffic over APRS as well as general announcements. APRS is at 1200 baud. If you have an APRS radio you have a TNC for Packet, but it's instruction set may be limited.

The latest digital mode is D-STAR. D-Star has two modes. The ICOM ID-1 provides a ham radio router on 1.2 GHz with enough speed / through put to be used to interface with an internet gateway. So far the only radio that supports this mode is the ID-1. D-STAR's VHF and UHF modes are Digital Voice with a Digital Data channel. This allows voice and 1200 baud data to ride on the same channel at the same time. The DV can also be linked into an internet gateway so you can access any other gateway connected to the internet or via backbone (read future meshnet).

To make use of either packet or D-Star, you do need a terminal program. At this time the packet mode is supported in the WinLINK 2K system using a few terminal products. The WinLINK terminal software can send e-mail type message traffic from packet to internet e-mail accounts and receive WinLINK e-mail on packet terminals. The most popular of these WinLINK terminal programs is RMS Express.

For D-Star the preferred terminal program is D-RATS. D-RATS allows multiple radios to be connected, provides keyboard to keyboard, e-mail like traffic and file transfer at 1200 baud (very slow but effective.). D-RATS is to be used at Marine Corps Marathon on D-STAR VHF and UHF. We may try it at the GW Birthday parade as well. Lots more to learn about these programs.

Many ARES groups have been using FLDIGI and MT-63 or JT-63 which use a sound card interface on just about any radio. Interfaces can be very simple or more complex from the Tigertronic Signalink to the Tigertronic Signalink USB or the RigBlaster family of interfaces,

but the basic set up is to link to the microphone inputs and speaker outputs on your computer. Some of these units have their own sound card and link to the serial or USB ports on your computer. While MT-63 or JT-63 are common with ARES groups, The sound card will give you PSK-31, RTTY, and several other digital modes for both HF and VHF use. There is also software mode for Packet, but I've not tried it.

We will try to provide a better program on these modes at the club in the near future.

73 Rick
N4ASX

Hamfests –

The Delaware State Convention in Georgetown, Delaware is on October 4. The location is the Sussex County Technical High School. Talk-in is on the 147.090 (PL 156.7) repeater.

The Columbia ARA CARAFest takes place on October 5 at the Howard County Fairgrounds. Always a good hamfest to find odds and ends. It's a short drive located off Routes 144 and 32 and I-70. Southern Maryland Tailgate Fest in Hollywood, MD on October 25. The location is the Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department firehouse. Its sponsored by the Saint Mary's County Amateur Radio Association.

The Mason Dixon hamfest in Westminster, MD on October 26. If you haven't signed up for the Marine Corps Marathon, you can go to a hamfest. Its located at the Carroll County Agriculture Center. Its sponsored by the Carroll County Amateur Radio Club.

Training -

Our class kicked off with 22 people in attendance, although 28 had expressed an interest in the class. Either way, that's a full class. There is a lot of interest from the CERT community in becoming licensed. The goal is to get everybody licensed and on the air. Best of luck to the graduating class of December 2014.

Contests -

October 4 & 5 – New Jersey QSO Party. Exchange is your state.

October 4 & 5 – California QSO Party. Exchange is your state.

October 11 & 12 – Pennsylvania QSO Party Exchange is your ARRL section..

October 11 & 12 – Arizona QSO Party. Exchange is your state.

October 18 & 19 – New York QSO Party. Exchange is RST and state.

October 18 & 19 – South Dakota QSO party. Exchange is your state.

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

October 20 thru 24 – ARRL School Club Roundup. Exchange is RST and class. Most of us at home will be in the “individual” class.

October 25 and 26 – CQ WW DX Contest. Exchange is RS and CQ Zone. We are in Zone 5.

November 1 thru 3 – ARRL Sweepstakes, CW portion. The exchange is fairly complex, serial number, precedence (A, B, M, Q, S, U), your callsign, check (year licensed) and ARRL section. So, my exchange with N8IK would be: N8IK 001A KA4GFY 79VA. The easy way to do this is to use the memory keyer on your radio and store everything from the precedence to the end. Then, you are only sending the other station’s callsign and the serial number. This is a great contest for working the US and Canada.

Club Repeaters -

The Alexandria Radio Club owns more repeaters than other clubs in the area. We have repeaters on every ham radio band between 6 meters and 23 cm. Here is a great opportunity to try a new band.

73,
Rich, KA4GFY

Future Programs

Craig, KK4INZ, has been asked to provide a program on how FEMA can make use of Amateur Radio in times of an emergency.

We will have a program on digital modes to follow up on the article above.

I have asked AMSAT and AMRAD to provide program.

We hope to have an update on use of some of the newest solar technology, use of the new micro computers and I am trying to find someone to talk about converting our old XP laptops to use a version of Lenex.

If you have an idea for a program, please let Rick know and he will try to find someone to provide the program.

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 \$11.00.