



1954-2024 – 70th Anniversary



ARC-SHORTS

The Newsletter of the Alexandria Radio Club
October 2024

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ARC demonstrated ham radio's commitment to emergency communications at our table at Alexandria's Preparedness Fair, September 20. Alexandria's new Fire Chief, Filipe Hernandez, was among the visitors. He's shown here with club President Sean, K4KBK, (l.) and PIO Jan, KB2LRX, (r.)

President's Corner

Sean (K4KBK)

Glad to have gone and survived but glad to have returned from the Heritage Tour 2024 in England, Scotland and Ireland. Great trip! Logged about 1800 accident-free driving miles on the wrong side of the road, a thousand rail miles and a maritime excursion into the North Atlantic between the Cliffs of Moher and the Aran Islands in 12–14-foot seas, a very sporting ride!

I did take an ID52 to use as I traveled about but that whole ham environment in Europe was much different from the US market. I was informed by the Royal Radio Society of the UK while in Dayton, that the predominant digital radio type in use in the UK was DSTAR but what I found was that the Ham market in the UK is nearly evenly split between DStar and DMR for digital radio, so only taking a DStar radio left me somewhat lacking.

The repeater systems in Europe are also very intriguing. Many are set up as multi-function repeaters, meaning that they can be used simultaneously for FM, DMR, DStar and System Fusion all on the one pair of channels. As explained to me by the MB6FU repeater admin up in Nairn Scotland, there is a smart receiver on the front end of the repeater that listens for the data format of received signals and directs the transmission internally to the proper stack; FM, DM, DStar or Sys Fusion. I thought that was a clever approach to managing multiple transmission types from a single location and single channel pair although I expect there could be a downside related to throughput, bandwidth throttling, etc., but the concept is fascinating nonetheless. What was even more bizarre was that I was listening to conversations that were running as DMR while I was setup on the same repeater but on a DStar channel. I couldn't transmit to them but I could hear just fine! Probably the biggest challenge to learning all of this was that I was wrapped into a conversation on an HT, talking with a guy with a very pronounced Scottish brogue. My ears were working triple overtime! Yikes!

I also discovered an interesting twist in DStar in the UK and that is the use of DSC reflectors. While we use the older type REF reflectors to link DSTAR across the internet here, Europe can use both types but predominantly use DSC reflectors. REF and DSC are two of the four reflector types in use globally for DStar (REF, XRF, DCS & XLX). As my ID52 is set up for the US market, it has preformatted commands to link, unlink, and interrogate the REF reflectors. I

later found out that the syntax to perform the same actions on the DSC reflectors is exactly the same as the REF reflectors, e.g., DCS062BL vice REF062BL. As I couldn't figure out the REF / DSC dilemma on the ID52, my new friend from MB6FU offered to set up REF062B so that I could connect with some of our club members who were also connected to the reflector. I made a couple of QSTs and our own Vice President roger'd up, clear as a bell, operating through his hotspot. We had a 40 min conversation and signed off. It was awesome!

Regarding CEPT, the European Conference on Postal and Telecommunications Administrations, which defines the European operating environment for foreign radio operators, the UK was simple and free for use providing you were carrying a copy of the CEPT agreement, a government photo id and that you would use M/Callsign for England and MM/Callsign for Scotland. Ireland was another matter. The Emerald Isle needed a pre-registration in advance of your visit along with 30 Euro and then you could use that returned approval document along with EI/Callsign to make amateur radio calls.

While it wasn't a contact-rich radio trip, I did learn a lot of valuable lessons which I will apply on my next trip. I will add DMR to my kit and take a small HF POTA setup. One lesson here was that if you are roaming the countryside on your UK/Ireland trips, the existence of nearby repeaters is almost nil so switching to HF setup is your best option if you want to communicate.

Comments / Questions always welcomed.

OK, enough about the trip, it's ARC time.

We are now three quarters of the way through 2024 and while we've made some inroads into becoming a better, stronger and "funner" club, we have a ways to go. For those that knew the acting Alexandria Emergency Management Officer, **Kevin Coleman**, I'm saddened to announce that Kevin has tendered his resignation to the City and will be returning to FEMA in some unannounced capacity. We wish him well.

The **Marines** are still looking for a few good amateur radio operators! Based on what information I've collected to date, ARC only has 9 operators participating. Volunteering to support the **Marine Corps Marathon** is always a fun event with real world impact. Please consider joining our volunteer team for the event. Surely we can pop up more than 9 people! If the sign-up process seems too confusing (yes, many think it is) please reach out to me or the other ARC MCM volunteers and we will walk you through the process and get you prepared.

Still hoping to get some interest in making our December event as much about our **70th year** as about the holidays. If you'd like to upscale from our regular Glory Days venue, we could potentially get access to a facility like the Lyceum in Old Town and have the meal catered for a very reasonable cost. It would be a nice event to bring your husband, wife or significant other to with very comfortable and classy accommodations BUT we need to know NOW if we are going to pull this together by December. Please send me an email ASAP indicating your interest or disinterest in participating in this celebratory event and what you think of the potential alternate venue.

Comments and questions are always welcome. Slainte!

73 to All,

Sean - K4KBK

Member News

Gene Jenkins, N4JEE, a veteran member of the club, was visiting the area from his home in New Bern, NC, and attended our last meeting. Gene was the leader who conceived and built the club's emergency radio communications trailer. He assembled the team that designed and configured it for emergency use. The trailer story and a video are available on our website, <http://www.w4hfh.org>.

At the meeting, Gene, reminisced about the trailer and thanked the many members who had contributed to its evolution over the years.



He also discussed the many ways the club had helped develop new hams by holding regular hands-on training sessions, helping youngsters build crystal sets, and teaching basic construction and communication skills.

He graciously declined when the subject of a club life-membership for him was discussed, saying this was probably the last time he would be visiting the area. The members at the meeting gave him a hearty round of applause.

ARES

Joe Kalfa, KD2HGZ

Hopefully you all are safe after the recent hurricane and from the incoming one. We wanted to take a minute to highlight what ARES is and what it can do for you. ARES is a program organized by the ARRL for amateur radio operators to be able to assist in emergency situations. Below is a brief summary of the most recent ARES-type activity related to natural disasters.



While there are a lot of lessons learned already from Hurricane Helene, I would like to highlight the efforts of K2DMG (not a club member), who basically ran a full dispatch center off a 2m FM repeater on Mount Mitchell, NC. As early as Friday, the net started with ham radio communicators checking in and giving reports on missing persons and conditions, and evolved into allowing aid workers and the fire department to coordinate HLZs and supply drops to areas completely cut off. This net was broadcast to the world for several days on Broadcastify. I am working to obtain audio highlights of their efforts on some key points that have come out of this so far.

Baofengs are in a lot more places than we realize and when a disaster strikes, many people will be breaking them out.

GMRS and FRS radios are going to be critical for communicating with a lot of people in need. I know we like to focus on ham radio, and ARES is a ham radio focused group, but we need to remember there are other technologies out there.

Ham radios were being handed out to relief workers and public safety teams as the VIPER (state-wide public safety radio system) had failed in many areas. (Source: this has been reported on the repeater traffic and I have seen social media posts. I have not seen any official press release notes or reporting to confirm this).

Refresh yourself on the Incident Command System, this system should be in play in every municipality experiencing disaster. If you plan to be involved in

any capacity with ARES or another group who has the potential to respond to a disaster, knowing how to interoperate will be critical to everyone's success.

PS: Here's a TV report on how hams are helping out in Tennessee.

<https://wcyb.com/news/local/radio-communication-being-used-to-talk-to-the-isolated-little-germany-community#webview=1>

Joe Kalfa, KD2HGZ
ARES EC

Activities and Events

At our September meeting, **Mike Aimone, W8AHZ**, ARRL Virginia Section Club Coordinator, gave a presentation on the upcoming Marine Corps Marathon, encouraging members to sign up for communication volunteers. (It's still not too late to sign up. Details are on the next page.)

Mike also gave an in-depth talk about grounding and bonding for amateur stations. He covered electrical service grounding in the ham shack, service entrance grounding, lightning protection for antennas in trees and metal antenna tower structures, and RF grounding.



Mike Aimone, W8AHZ, (r.) addresses the meeting, with Vice President Bob Crumley, KO4ZIK.



WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

MARINE CORPS MARATHON
AMATEUR RADIO VOLUNTEERS

Seeking operators for the premier, national, amateur radio, sports volunteering opportunity!

For most, the only requirement is a VHF/UHF radio, a sense of duty, the a willingness to have fun, and don't forget your shirt size for the courtesy Marine Corps shirt.

You must register on both sites:

- 1) marinemarathon.com/volunteer
- 2) hamvolunteers.com

 



Photo/Design: K3MRL / Printing courtesy of Ham Community

MCM Key dates

Radio Test Day: Monday, October 14, 2024

All Hands Training Event: Saturday, October 19, 2024 at the Armed Forces Retirement Home

MCM Race Day: Sunday, October 27, 2024

More info at hamvolunteers.com/MCM

Help Scouts at Jamboree-on-the-Air, October 19

Gary Sessums, KC5QCN—a member of ARC, the Arlington Amateur Radio Club (AARC) and the Pentagon Amateur Radio Club (PARC)—has invited us to join in hosting a field exercise as part of the Boy Scouts Annual Jamboree-on-the-Air (JOTA).

The event will be part of the monthly POTA event that AARC runs at the **Columbia Island Marina**, off George Washington Memorial Parkway. Date and time: **Saturday, 19 October, from 0800–1400 hrs.** Parking is plentiful and a full-scale restaurant with bathroom facilities is available as a part of the marina.

Anyone in the Alexandria Radio Club who has connections with any of the scouting groups—Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Sea Scouts, etc.—can invite them to participate, singly or as a group. Once we have some feedback on numbers of potential attendees, we will coordinate with Gary on the number and type of stations we will need to set up.

A couple of stations from the members of the Alexandria Radio Club in addition to the two or three that Gary normally sets up will probably be sufficient.

Please let ARC President **Sean Gallagher, K4KBK**, know how many scouting groups may be interested. Sean will identify a point of contact for this event once he gets feedback.

Hamfests:

- **Oct. 20, Radio FallFest 2024**, Mid-Atlantic Antique Radio Club, Davidson, MD. Vintage electronics, Flea Market & Auction.
<http://maarc.org/radio-fallfest-2024/>

Contests:

- **Oct. 12-13, Nevada QSO Party.** <http://nvqso.com>
- **Oct. 12-13, Arizona QSO Party.** <http://azqp.org>
- **Oct. 12-13, Pennsylvania QSO Party.** <http://paqso.org>
- **Oct. 12-13, South Dakota QSO Party.** <http://www.sdqsoparty.com>
- **Oct. 19-20, New York QSO Party.** <http://www.nyqp.org>
- **Oct. 20-21, Illinois QSO Party.** <http://w9awe.org/ilqp>
- **Oct. 21-25, School Club Roundup.** <http://www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup>

(Selected from ARRL Contest Calendar www.arrl.org/contest-calendar)

Special Events:

- **Oct. 19, Yorktown Special Event**, 243d anniversary of the British surrender at Yorktown. <https://www.k4rc.net/events/special-event-stations/>

(Selected from ARRL Special Events Calendar <https://www.arrl.org/special-event-stations>)

Alexandria Radio Club Date Book

Coming Events

Saturday, October 19, 8 am to 2 pm: Jamboree on-the-Air, Columbia Island Marina (jointly with Arlington Amateur Radio Club and Pentagon Amateur Radio Club)

October 27: Marine Corps Marathon

Next Meeting

Will be held at 7 p.m., Friday, October 11, at the Alexandria Police Department Emergency Operations Center Community Room, 3600 Wheeler Avenue.

Last Meeting

Date: September 13, 2024

Time: 1900 hours

Location: Alexandria Police Department Emergency Operations Center Community Room, 3600 Wheeler Avenue.

Minutes: — Jack York, KE7VOU, Secretary

1. 19 members were present at the meeting location of the Alexandria City Police Department at 3600 Wheeler Avenue with 2 members participating in the online Zoom meeting.
2. The treasurer reported a total balance of \$13,433.61 in club accounts with a total of 78 paid members including 2 membership renewals. A re-occurring cellular bill is paid to ATT every month for \$46.91. Field Day food and supply expenses still have not been paid.
3. **Bob Crumley**, KO4ZIK, discussed new methods of recruiting additional members such as radio nets focused on the topics of ARES or JS8.
4. **Jack York**, KE7VOU, summarized the secretary's report for the August 9th meeting.
5. **Mike Aimone**, WA8AHZ, gave a presentation on volunteering for the Marine Corp Marathon on October 27th in Arlington County, Virginia. A radio test day is scheduled for October 14th and a training day will occur on October 19th at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in DC.
6. **Mike Aimone**, WA8AHZ, also gave a presentation on radio station grounding and bonding.
7. Committee reports started with **Ian Keith**, N8IK, reporting that all repeaters are functioning. Ian recommended that the club begin planning to move the repeaters to the new hospital location. **Richard Morani**, KW4UJ, reported that the fall license classes will begin on October 1st with electronic exams being held on December 3rd. Richard also reported no problems with the website. **KB2LRX**, **Jan Maas**, PIO, published the latest version of Arc-Shorts on the club website earlier in the week. The club will have an information table at the Alexandria City Preparedness

Fair on September 20th. The Arlington Amateur Radio Club has invited the club to participate in The Boy Scouts of America Jamboree on the Air Event to be held on Saturday, October 19th, from 8 am to 2 pm at Columbia Island Marina in the Lady Bird Johnson Park next to the southbound George Washington Parkway. Suggestions are still being taken to celebrate the club's 70th anniversary in 2024. **Bryan Pettigrew**, WD4ADF, reported that all net control operator slots are filled until the next meeting in October.

8. **Bob Crumley**, KO4ZIK, reported that the search continues for annual storage space contract for club items.
9. **Gene Jenkins**, N4JEE, a long-time ARC member was visiting from his home in North Carolina. A proposal to nominate him for club life-membership because of his many contributions to the club, including the design and construction of the club radio trailer, was discussed. But Gene declined the offer and thanked those who had contributed to the trailer's development over the years.

Attendance (19 in person, 2 remotely)

Name	Call Sign	Name	Call Sign	Name	Call Sign
Bob	KO4ZIK	Sandy	KQ4DNE	Ryan	KO4EBY
Jack	KE7VOU	Scott G	KM4RDR	Don	KI4D
Erik	KI4BXU	Paul	KQ4LJS	Louis	KO4QVB
Ted	W9TCE	Gary	KC5QCN		
Ian	N8IK	Richard	KW4UJ		
Wilson	KM4KLL	Bryan	WD4ADF		
Jan	KB2LRX	Gene	N4JEE		
Richard	KW4UJ	Kim	(no call)		
Pete	N2KFA	Eric	KK7QFQ		

PLEASE USE OUR REPEATERS

Club Repeaters: 147.315+ (PL 107.2), 444.6+ (PL107.2), 224.82- (PL107.2), 53.130- (PL107.2) 927.600 (-25Mhz, PL107.2), and 1282.600- (PL 107.2), DSTAR 145.380Mhz, 442.060+, and 1284.600-; DMR IS UP AND RUNNING 442.4125 +5Mhz Color Code 1.

Alexandria Radio Club mailing list

Home: <http://mailman.qth.net/mailman/listinfo/alexandriaradioclub>

Help: <http://mailman.qth.net/mmfaq.htm>

Post: mailto: AlexandriaRadioClub@[mailman.qth.net](mailto:AlexandriaRadioClub@mailman.qth.net)

This list hosted by: <http://www.qsl.net>. Please help support this email list:

<http://www.qsl.net/donate.html>

Club Leadership

Elected Officers for 2024 * †

Sean Gallagher, K4KBK—President

Bob Crumley, KO4ZIK

—Vice President

Jack York, KE7VOU—Secretary ††

Erik Misavage, KI4BXU—Treasurer

Elected Board of Directors, At Large* †

Sandy Kenyon, KQ4DNE

Joseph A. Porcelli, KT3I

Paul Cataldo, KQ4LJS

* Voting members of the leadership group are the elected officers and elected directors.

† Don Lewis, KI4D, was elected President in November, 2023, but resigned for health reasons on Jan. 12, 2024, at which time Sean Gallagher assumed the Presidency. The office of Vice President and a Director's position were filled by a special election at the February 9, 2024 meeting. †† Carol Myers, KN4LLL, resigned as Secretary in May, 2024. Jack York, KE7VOU, was elected at the June 14 meeting.

Committee Chairmen

Jan Maas, KB2LRX—Public Information
Officer (PIO)

Gary Sessums, KC5QCN—Club Metro
Area Liaison

Club Leadership Group members may be contacted using the following email addresses:

<mailto:president@w4hfh.org> president@w4hfh.org

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ARC-SHORTS compiled by Jan A. Maas (KB2LRX) – ARC Public Information Officer