



ARC-SHORTS

The Newsletter of the Alexandria Radio Club
March 2026

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Marc Barbieri (l.), Alexandria's Emergency Communications Manager, briefs ARC members before the St. Patrick's Day Parade, March 7. (Parade stories and photos below.)

President's Corner

Aaron Kahn (K6HLC)

I would like to say thanks to everyone who came out for the **Alexandria GW Parade** on February 14. We had a great time, and the weather was perfect for the event. If you missed this event, but would like to help out the community and have fun doing radio at the same time, there is **Cherry Blossom 10-Miler on April 12** Earlier there is the **Winterfest Hamfest March 15** (<https://viennawireless.net/wp/winterfest/>).

Another item for the calendar coming up is the **Virginia QSO party**, which **Don Lewis (KI4D)** says more about below. This is a wonderful no-stress “contest” to participate in.

Personally, I have been having fun tweaking the **CW software I wrote**. I have made some contacts in CW using this software, even though I don’t actually know Morse. If anyone would like to get a copy of this software (it is written to interface with the Icom IC-7300 radio), let me know (president@w4hfh.org).

Till next time,

73, Aaron, K6HLC

Member News

Congratulations New Extra

Keith J. Regatts, KR4JEG

Alexandria Radio Club Date Book

Coming Events

Sunday, March 15: WINTERFEST 2026, Oakton High School, 2900 Sutton Road, Vienna Virginia, 22181.

March 21-22: Virginia QSO Party

Activities and Events

It's Parade Season in Alexandria, and ARC is There

Members of the Alexandria Radio Club provided communications for the city's two annual parades: **The George Washington Birthday Parade**, Feb. 14, and the **St. Patrick's Day Parade**, March 7. It's a longstanding role for ARC hams, who accompany parade marshals in the staging areas before step-off and transmit last-minute changes in the order of march to our club trailer. These changes are then delivered to the grandstand, thus ensuring that the announcer has accurate description of the parade as it approaches.



(From upper left) The team ready at our trailer for the George Washington Parade. The General himself greeted us before the event stepped off. (Brian Hinton is a veteran Washington interpreter.) At the St. Patrick's Day event, marshals and ham communicators gathered before heading to the staging areas.

Virginia QSO Party Coming Up

The March Meeting of the Alexandria Radio Club will feature a Virginia QSO Party Zoom presentation by **Gordon Miller, NQ4K**, the QSO party coordinator. The Virginia QSO Party is an annual amateur radio competition held in mid-March designed to promote radio contact with Virginia's 95 counties and 39 independent cities. It is sponsored by the [Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club \(SPARC\)](#), which invites amateur operators worldwide to make contact with Virginia stations via CW, SSB, and digital modes.

Virginia stations contact as many stations as possible, while outside stations focus on contacting as many Virginia counties/cities as possible. The 2026 event runs from March 21-22, Saturday (1400 UTC-0400 UTC) to Sunday (1200 UTC-2400 UTC). As a tradition, for many years Gordon traveled to Alexandria to brief the Alexandria Radio Club on the details of the upcoming annual Virginia QSO party. Each year, Gordon took a photo of club membership at the meeting, which is a part of club history. Every year, the Alexandria Radio Club competes as a club with other clubs and donates two plaques that are awarded to party contestants. In past years, club members have developed club "game plans" to help maximize club participation. POC for this event is Don Lewis, KI4D.

73, Don Lewis, KI4D

Get on the Air as W1AW/4

ARRL is celebrating America's 250th anniversary by organizing a yearlong Worked-All-States operating event. Hams in each state can activate as W1AW/portable in two weeks during the year. Virginia's first week, when hams in the state can operate as W1AW/4, begins at 0000Z, Wednesday, March 11, and ends at 2359Z, Tuesday, March 17. **Mike Aimone, WA8AHZ**, of the Vienna Wireless Society (and newly elected Virginia Section Manager), is the coordinator for the event. Further details may be found at <https://www.arrl.org/america250-was>, and the VWS website, <https://viennawireless.net/wp/>. (Scroll down to find a link to the sign-up sheet. Mike will contact you with more instructions.)

EmComm Notes

Despite the relatively short notice, the Alexandria Radio Club provided operators to support the alternate communications network managed by the DC Metropolitan Amateur Radio Program (MARP) for the DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency during the **State of the Union address** on February 24th.

Following a coordination video conference led by James Farley, Interoperability Program Coordinator of the DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, along with Prince George's County EOC and Montgomery County (MD) ARES, our team monitored a selected repeater from 3 PM until shortly after 11 PM. Radio checks were conducted hourly on the N3ERA repeater. While no significant events were recorded, the activation provided a valuable opportunity to support the Capital Region and demonstrate our club's readiness without needing to activate the EOC.

This activation allowed us to verify our planning and coordination processes, confirm the availability of communication channels, and ensure the efficiency of our equipment and voice procedures. The presence of ARC in the net highlighted the voluntary contributions of operators from across the entire DMV amateur radio community.

Stex, K4IEW

ARC Club Repeaters

6m: 53.130- (PL 107.2)

2m: 147.315+ (PL 107.2)

1.25m: 224.820- (PL 107.2)

70cm: 444.600+ (PL 107.2)

33cm: 927.600- (PL107.2)

23cm: 1282.600- (PL 107.2)

D-STAR 2m: 145.380-

D-STAR 70cm: 442.060+

D-STAR 23cm: 1284.600-

DMR 70 cm: 442.4125 +5Mhz

Color Code 1

Hamfests:

March 15, WINTERFEST, The National Capital Area Ham Radio Fair, ARRL Virginia State Convention. Oakton High School, 2900 Sutton Road, Vienna Virginia, 22181. <https://viennawireless.net/wp/winterfest/>.

Contests/QSO Parties:

- March 14-15, Oklahoma QSO Party. <http://k5cm.com/okqp.htm>
- March 14-15, Idaho QSO Party. <https://www.idahoqsoparty.org/>
- March 15, Wisconsin QSO Party.
https://www.warac.org/wqp/wiqp_rules.htm
- March 21-22. Virginia QSO Party. <http://www.qsl.net/sterling>
- April 4-5. Louisiana QSO Party. <https://laqp.louisianacontestclub.org/>
- April 4-5. Mississippi QSO Party. <https://arrlmiss.org/mississippi-qso-party/>
- April 11-12. New Mexico QSO Party.
<https://www.newmexicoqsoparty.org/wp/>
(Selected from ARRL Contests Calendar <http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar>)

Special Events:

- March 15, Battleship USS Wisconsin BB-64 on the air in honor of Wisconsin QSO party, N4WIS. <https://n4wis.com/uss-wisconsin-radio-club/clubevents/wisconsin-qso-party/>
(Selected from ARRL Special Events Calendar <https://www.arrl.org/special-event-stations>)

Next Meeting

Friday, March 13, 1900 hours, Alexandria Police Department HQ, 3600 Wheeler Ave., Alexandria, VA, 22304.

Last Meeting

Date: February 13, 2026

Time: 1900 hours

Location: Alexandria Police Department HQ, 3600 Wheeler Ave., Alexandria, VA, 22304.

1. Call to Order & Opening

- Meeting called to order by Aaron Kahn, K6HLC.
- Introductions were conducted, 22 attendees. Welcome Ira to the club meeting.
- A Moment of Silence was observed in memory of Silent Key: John Kanode, N4MM, former Roanoke Division Director and ARRL Vice President. John was awarded the title of ARRL Honorary Vice President by the ARRL leadership.

2. Awards & Certificates

- No awards or certificates to present since the last meeting.

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Motion to approve the previous meeting minutes made by Sean, K4KBK.
- Motion seconded. Called to vote.
- Result: Motion approved.

4. Recent Events

Winter Field Day

- Special thanks extended to all who participated, particularly Skip, KO2THF, for planning and Joe P., KT3I, for helping secure the Fire Station.
- The club successfully activated 12 bands.
- Members are encouraged to send suggestions for future Winter Field Day events via email
- Feedback noted so far: more pizza and donuts.

Snowed-In 2m Nets

- Special thanks to Bryan, WD4ADF, for organizing and running the snowed-in 2m nets.

5. Officer Reports

Board Report – Skip, KO2THF

- Next major agenda item will be the continued discussion on 501(c)(3) status.
- Board meetings are not intended to be secret; monthly club meetings will serve as a continuation of board meeting and discussion.

Treasurer Report - Richard, KW4UJ

- Richard is currently in Florida attending Hamcation; audit report to be continued upon his return.
- Aaron, K6HLC, presented finance slides; a net loss was reported for the month.
- Annual liability policy payment: Ian, N8IK, will make payment and be reimbursed by Richard upon return.

6. Committee Reports

Membership – Sandy, KQ4DNE

- One new member recently joined via PayPal.

- Mentioned that he and Jan, KB2LRX will explore using commercial broadcasters for Field Day publicity - jokingly stated that 3am listeners would be ideal target base.
- Ian, N8IK, described the new member onboarding process: most members join via PayPal; Ian adds them to the email reflector and CCs appropriate committees for distribution and welcome.

Public Information Officer - Jan, KB2LRX

- Jan submitted an email update. Regarding the “Year of the Club” newsletter contest, Jan submitted an entry and results will be announced in May.

ARES – Joe K, KD2HZG

- JS8Call QSO Party scheduled for February 14th.
- A presentation on Allstar will follow the club meeting.

Repeater Status – Ian, N8IK

- No new news. The 2m repeater issue from several months ago has been resolved.

Emergency Communications – Stex, K4IEW

- School presentation: Stex is updating the briefing and will provide a revised version to the club for review.
- The recent snow net served as a real-life example of emergency communications in action: members were notified 15 minutes before the net and joined, providing real-time information.

Training and Testing - Gary, KC5QCN - Richard, KW4UJ

- No updates. Gary and Richard are out of town.

Trailer – Sean, K4KBK

- The trailer is ready for the George Washington Birthday Parade on February 14th.
- The generator is ready; propane tanks are filled.
- The trailer will be set up behind the review stand. Sean, K4KBK, will be on-site by 8:00 AM.
- Members who wish to help and have not yet signed up are welcome to come by the trailer.

Webmaster - Richard, KWUJ

- Richard is out of town – no updates.

Socials - Jason, WA6MPR

- Jason not present – no updates.

Net Control - Bryan, WD4ADF

- Bryan not present – no updates.
- Aaron, K6HLC - Additional thanks expressed for the pop-up snow nets.

Summer Field Day

- Still seeking a Field Day leader for 2026. Members interested in leading are encouraged to come forward; support will be provided.

7. Old Business

- No old business to report.

8. New Business

Upcoming Parades & Events

- George Washington Birthday Parade – February 14th.
- St. Patrick's Day Parade – March 7th.
- Cherry Blossom 10-Miler & 5K Support (April) – Similar to Marine Marathon support.

Details:

- Sunday 10-Miler is a qualifier for other marathons.
- Saturday events include a kids' race and 5K in Arlington.
- Two separate events on Saturday and Sunday; members may sign up for one or both.
- For more information, see the email from Joe K, KD2HZG, on the reflector, or contact Joe K or Joe P, KT3I.

Vienna Wireless Winterfest

- Sunday, March 15th.

Merchandise Update – Louis, KO4QVB

- Waiting for samples to arrive for club approval: 2 ball caps and 4 shirts on order.
- Plan is to create a portal on the club website where members can order directly from the vendor.

Virginia QSO Party – March 21–22

- Don, KI4D, raised the question of club participation in the Virginia QSO Party.
- Aaron, K6HLC: Historically, individuals participate; the club has not recently participated as a group.
- Joe K, KD2HZG: Recalled past participation where a group traveled to a “rare” county, operating as W4HFH and as individuals.
- Jay, KV3W: Confirmed prior group outings to rare counties.
- Erik, KI4BXU: Planning to go to Bear Creek Lake in Cumberland County.
- Don, KI4D: Volunteered to serve as lead and coordinate club participation.
- Awards: Aaron, K6HLC, confirmed the club is supporting 2 awards already budgeted for the QSO party.

9. General Comments

- Sandy, KQ4DNE, announced he will be in Hawaii in March and will post on Discord / send emails if members are interested in contacting him for Parks on the Air (POTA).

10. Action Items

Responsible Party	Action Item
Stex, K4IEW	Complete updated school presentation briefing and share with club.
Sandy, KQ4DNE / Jan, KB2LRX	Explore commercial broadcaster outreach for Field Day publicity.
Don, KI4D	Serve as lead and coordinate club participation in the Virginia QSO Party (March 21-22).
Louis, KO4QVB	Receive merchandise samples; present to club for approval before opening order portal.
All Members	Send Winter Field Day improvement suggestions to the club.
All Members Interested	Sign up to help with Parades or support the races in April
Summer Field Day Leader	Volunteer to lead Summer Field Day 2026 – contact the club.

11. Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned.

Minutes recorded by: Mike Joyce, KQ4WOI

Email questions to secretary@w4hfh.org

Detailed Meeting Attendance

Recorded Attendance, February 13th, 2026 (17 in person, 5 remotely)

Aaron, K6HLC	Sandy, KQ4DNE	Don, KI4D	Ira, No Call	Erik, KI4BXU
Skip, KO2THF	Jay, KV3W	Louis, KO4QVB	Joe P, KT3I	Oleg, KZ4FY
Ian, N8IK	Stex, K4IEW	Ted, W9TCE		Pete, N2KFA
Mike, KQ4WOI	Joe K, KD2HZG	Tom L, NH7XJ		Jan, KB2LRX
Sean, K4KBK	Larry, KQ4SBC	Tom K, KQ4DUO		Gary, KC7TNU

Club Leadership

Elected Officers for 2026 *

Aaron Kahn, K6HLC—President

William A. “Skip” Dronen, Jr., KO2THF

—Vice President

Mike Joyce, KQ4WOI—Secretary

Richard Morani, KW4UJ—Treasurer

Elected Board of Directors, At Large*

Sandy Kenyon, KQ4DNE

Joseph A. Porcelli, KT3I

Sean Gallagher, K4KBK

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

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

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

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

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