



# ARC-SHORTS

The Newsletter of the Alexandria Radio Club

April 2026

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Gordon Miller, NQ4K, Zoomed into our March meeting to brief the club on the Virginia QSO Party. (Story below.)

## President's Corner

Aaron Kahn (K6HLC)

It appears that spring has finally arrived, and the green is making a comeback. With that, I hope that you are getting out and enjoying the nice weather. Over the past month work has taken me to the Dallas area. I took my HT and made a nice QSO with a local Ham in the Dallas area. For those who may not know, there is an app called [Repeater Book](#), which allows one to see all of the repeaters in the local area. This is a great way to have some radio fun when on travel. Also, for spring break, my family and I recently went to Tahoe, CA. There, I came across a wonderful article on how back-country skiers have turned the humble FRS radio into a true life-saving piece of kit. See the article here: [Tahoe Daily Tribune](#).

I hope that those who participated in the Virginia QSO party in March had a good time, along with those who attended Winterfest. As a reminder the Cherry Blossom 10-Miler is on April 12, and there are still a few spots left if you are interested in helping out. I look forward to seeing you at the meeting, and hearing you on the air.

Till next time,

**73, Aaron, K6HLC**

## **Member News**

**Welcome New Member**

**Brian Anderson, KN4NHM**

**Congratulations New Extra**

**Larry Corcoran, KQ4SBC**

## **Activities and Events**

### ***April Meeting Preview***

**Featured Presentation: Slow Scan Television (SSTV) by Gary Sessums (KC5QCN)**

Slow-scan television (SSTV) is a picture transmission method, used mainly by amateur radio operators, to transmit and receive static pictures via radio in monochrome or color. SSTV operates using voice frequencies over HF, VHF and UHF radio frequencies.

Gary has been a licensed amateur radio operator for over 25 years and has served as a RACES Radio Officer and an ARES Emergency Coordinator. He led a Florida commo team in deploying emergency communications systems responding to Hurricane Katrina. He was selected by the ARRL for the “Force of Fifty” deployed to Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria.

Gary provides professional command and control communications support for the Department of Defense at the Pentagon. He also leads the Pentagon Radio Club where he is member of Air Force MARS and the Department of Homeland Security SHARES HF radio program. He is president of the Arlington Amateur Radio Club and is a member of the Alexandria Radio Club. For a number of years, Gary has led a Volunteer Examiner (VE) Team conducting FCC exams on a monthly basis as well as at special events held in the DC/Metro area, as required.

## *Last Meeting Highlights*

### **ARC Briefed on Virginia QSO Party**



**ARC traditionally takes part in the Virginia QSO Party and usually gets a pre-Party visit from Gordon Miller, NQ4Z, of the Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club, which organizes the Party. This year Gordon logged in on Zoom and encouraged us to participate in the March 21 and 22 event. Gordon usually takes a club picture, and this one has been sent his way. Stats on the party and certificates will be available at a later meeting.**

## Club Merchandise Now Available



Sean, K4KBK, has arranged for wearable club gear to be available at

<https://alexandriarc.goldmedalideas.com/>

Items include caps and shirts in many sizes.

They can include the club logo and a member's call sign.

At our last meeting, Sean (l.) and Aaron, K6HLC, displayed a shirt.

## SKYWARN Class

The National Weather Service Baltimore/Washington Weather Forecast Office will host a ***Flood SKYWARN Class in Alexandria, VA***. The 2 hour training session will be held on **Wednesday, May 6, 2026, at 6 pm**, at the Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St. Alexandria, VA 22314.



<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeJTdEh9s4XGc9nkdW8xN6mzDF8lHpq9dvCfi90oY6iTHQTiQ/viewform>

## Alexandria Radio Club Date Book

### *Coming Events*

**Sunday, May 31: D-Day Commemoration.** John Carlisle Square, Alexandria.

**Saturday-Sunday, June 27-28. Field Day.** Chinquapin Park.

# EmComm Notes

## Navigating the NIFOG 2.2:

### Why Every Radio Amateur Involved in EmComm Should Read It

In the world of emergency communications (EmComm), the boundary between “amateur” and “professional” is defined by **interoperability**. When disaster strikes, the ability of different agencies and volunteer groups to talk to one another is the thin line between chaos and coordination. For hams in the United States, the primary “map” for this landscape is the **National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG)**.

With the release of **Version 2.2**, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has provided an updated, essential resource that every ARES, RACES, or AUXCOMM member should study. Here is why the NIFOG 2.2 is a gamechanger for the amateur radio community.

But first thing first: what is the NIFOG? It’s a technical reference for radio technicians and emergency responders. It contains the “Nationwide Interoperability Channels”—standardized frequencies assigned by the FCC for use during disasters to allow police, fire, EMS, and federal agencies to communicate across jurisdictional lines.

Based on my poor experience, one of the most frequent points of failure in an emergency is naming. If one group calls a frequency “Tactical 1” and another calls it “Command,” confusion follows. The NIFOG 2.2 mandates the **Standardized Channel Nomenclature**. For hams working in a Unified Command environment, knowing that *VTAC36* refers to 159.4725 MHz (with specific tones) is vital for integrating with public safety partners.

The guide lists the nationwide VHF, UHF, 700 MHz, and 800 MHz interoperability channels. While amateur radio operators cannot transmit on some of these frequencies using ham gear (unless specifically authorized under 47 CFR § 90.407 or during an immediate threat to life), having these programmed into a **scanner** or a Part 90-certified radio for monitoring is essential for situational awareness.

For those interested in HF, the NIFOG 2.2 includes a section on **High Frequency (HF) Interoperability**. This is particularly relevant for hams involved in SHARES (Shared Resources) or those supporting long-haul communications when local infrastructure fails. It details the use of **ALE (Automatic Link Establishment)**, a technology that many modern ham transceivers now support, bridging the gap between amateur experimentation and professional reliability.

The 2.2 version expands significantly on satellite communications and tactical data. As the amateur community moves toward digital modes (Winlink, VARA, and mesh networking), the NIFOG provides a framework for how professionals handle data in the field. Understanding these protocols helps hams design amateur systems that can better “interface” with the needs of served agencies.

The guide provides clear tables on interference mitigation, CTSS/DCS tones, and P21 (Project 25) digital standards. For the technical ham, these tables are a goldmine of information for configuring repeaters and portable stations to be “interop-ready.”

The NIFOG specifically recognizes the role of **Auxiliary Communications (AUXCOMM)**. This term encompasses amateur radio operators who have been trained to work within the Incident Command System (ICS). By studying the NIFOG, hams move beyond just “talking on the radio” and become professional assets capable of operating within a complex, multi-agency response.

In conclusion, the NIFOG 2.2 is not just a list of frequencies; it is a blueprint for how America communicates during its worst days. For any radio amateur willing to serve the public service, this 200-page PDF is mandatory reading. It ensures that when we are called to help, we speak the same language as the professionals we support.

To view and download PDF version, visit: <https://www.cisa.gov/safecom/field-operations-guides>

In addition, the electronic National Interoperable Field Operations Guide version 2.02 is now available as part of the Public Safety Library (PS mobile app on Apple® iOS™ and Google® Android™ devices.)



## Web Links

- Apple app store (iOS): [apps.apple.com/us/app/public-safety-library/id1593251905](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/public-safety-library/id1593251905)
- Google Play  
(Android): [play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.saic.publicsafetylibrary](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.saic.publicsafetylibrary)

**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:*

- **April 18, Delmarva Radio and Electronics Expo.** Sussex Academy, 21150 Airport Road, Georgetown, DE, 19947  
<http://www.radioelectronicsexpo.com>
- **Saturday, June 20, Manassas Hamfest.** Colgan High School, 13833 Dumfries Road, Manassas, VA. <https://w4ovh.net/welcome-to-manassas-hamfest/>

## *Contests/QSO Parties:*

- **April 11-12. New Mexico QSO Party.**  
<https://www.newmexicoqsoparty.org/wp/>
- **April 11-12. Missouri QSO Party.**  
<https://www.w0ma.org/index.php/missouri-qso-party>
- **April 11-12. North Dakota QSO Party.** <https://ndarrlsection.com/>
- **April 11-12. Georgia QSO Party.** <https://gaqsoparty.com/>
- **April 18-19. Michigan QSO Party.** <https://miqp.org>
- **April 18-19. Ontario QSO Party.**  
<https://www.va3cco.com/oqp/index.htm>
- **April 19. Quebec QSO Party.** <https://quebecqsoparty.org/>
- **April 25-26. Nebraska QSO Party.** <https://nebraskaqsoparty.com/>
- **April 25-26. Florida QSO Party.** <https://floridaqsoparty.org/>
- **May 2-3. Indiana QSO Party.** <http://www.hdxcc.org/inqp/>
- **May 2-3. Delaware QSO Party.**  
<https://www.fsarc.org/qsoparty/qsohome.htm>
- **May 2-3. New England QSO Party.** <https://neqp.org/>  
(Selected from ARRL Contests Calendar <http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar>)

## *Special Events:*

- **April 25, International Marconi Day, K3S.** Nuclear Ship Savannah Amateur Radio Club, Baltimore, MD. <http://www.qrz.com/db/K3S>  
(Selected from ARRL Special Events Calendar <https://www.arrl.org/special-event-stations>)

## **Next Meeting**

**Friday, April 10, 1900 hours, Alexandria Police Department HQ, 3600 Wheeler Ave., Alexandria, VA, 22304.**

# **Last Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** March 13, 2026

**Time:** 1900 hours

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

## **1. Call to Order & Opening**

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- Meeting called to order by Aaron Kahn, K6HLC at 1900 hours.
- Club member introductions were conducted.
- New member / visitor welcomed: Brian Anderson, KN4NHM.
- No Silent Keys to report.

### **Pre-Meeting Presentation:**

- Gordon Miller, NQ4K, delivered a presentation on the Virginia QSO Party prior to the meeting.

## **2. Awards & Certificates**

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

## **3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

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- Aaron, K6HLC asked if there were any corrections to the minutes from the last meeting. None were noted.
- Motion to approve the previous meeting minutes made by Richard. Motion seconded.
- Result: Minutes approved.

## **4. Recent Events**

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### **George Washington Birthday Parade & St. Patrick's Day Parade**

- Sean, K4KBK, provided a summary of both parades.
- The club successfully participated in the George Washington Birthday Parade and the St. Patrick's Day Parade.
- Participants received pins at the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

## **5. Upcoming Events**

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- Vienna Wireless Winterfest – Sunday, March 15th.
- Cherry Blossom 5K – April 11th.
- Cherry Blossom 10-Miler – April 12th.

## **6. Officer Reports**

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### **Board Report – Skip, KO2THF**

- 501(c)(3) update: The board has been meeting to update documentation. Documentation will be provided to club members with ample time for review.

### Secretary Report – Mike, KQ4WOI

- No corrections to previous meeting minutes.

### Treasurer Report – Richard, KW4UJ

- Richard has returned from Florida.
- Profit & Loss for February: \$100.34 in, \$55.85 out. Net gain of \$44.49 for the month.
- Richard reviewed bank and book balances: Bank balance \$13,209.00; Book balance \$791.12, with \$585.94 in outstanding checks not yet cashed.

## 7. Committee Reports

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### Membership

- Sandy, KQ4DNE, not present – no updates.

### Public Information Officer – Jan, KB2LRX

- Jan followed up on the plan to donate ARRL books to the Alexandria Public Library. After receiving the library's go-ahead, he ordered the books from ARRL. Jan is awaiting a response regarding a potential publicity photo opportunity.
- Long-term goal: explore the possibility of hosting a ham radio demonstration at the library.
- Regarding Field Day publicity: Sandy, KQ4DNE, had proposed a radio spot for local stations. Jan learned from Mike Aimone, WA8AHZ, that Wayne Rash, N4HCR, the Public Affairs Coordinator for the ARRL Virginia Section, may be working with WTOP on Field Day publicity. Jan will follow up to explore collaboration.

### ARES – Joe K, KD2HZG

- Joe K not present – no updates.

### Repeater Status – Ian, N8IK

- All repeaters are functional.
- DMR is currently in local mode. The VPN certificate has expired; a solution has been identified and will be implemented.

### Emergency Communications – Stex, K4IEW

- Stex expressed appreciation for the club's support at the State of the Union event and the parades.
- State of the Union: The club provided a backup network in connection with DHS.
- Stex proud of the club's planning and execution at the parades
- Jan, KB2LRX, asked whether the club expects involvement with America 250 / 4th of July events. Gary, KC5QCN, noted that after Mike Aimone takes over as Section Manager, section leadership will meet to discuss.
- Sean, K4KKBK, noted that in recent years the club has loaned radios to local police for parade support, including placing a listen-only radio in the command bus. Ian, N8IK, raised the question of whether a scanner would be more appropriate than a full radio.

### Training and Testing – Gary, KC5QCN / Richard, KW4UJ

- Classes are underway – currently in week 2 of 10. There are 12 students enrolled.
- Vienna Wireless Winterfest (March 15th): Free ham exam at 10:00 AM. As of March 13th, 20 pre-registered; walk-ins welcome. Tailgate begins at 7:00 AM, doors open at 8:00 AM.
- The club is always looking for new Volunteer Examiners (VEs).
- Action: Sean, K4KKBK, to reserve a room for testing in May.

### Trailer – Sean, K4KBK

- Trailer is operational; all systems working.
- New cleaning process using Simple Green implemented (no water access on site).
- Charger rewiring in progress.
- Next trailer event is Field Day.

### Webmaster – Richard, KW4UJ

- Richard asked Jan, KB2LRX, to send parade photos from ARC Shorts. Aaron, K6HLC, will also send photos.

### Socials – Jason, WA6MPR

- Jason not present – no updates.

### Net Control – Bryan, WD4ADF

- Five 2m nets planned for April.
- Special nets: Bryan is open to trying again – members interested should send Bryan a note.
- Possible 2m SSTV net discussed; needs a club decision.
- Bryan noted he won't be the "golden voice" forever and is looking for an understudy.
- Gary, KC5QCN, has done numerous SSTV presentations and expressed strong interest. Aaron, K6HLC, suggested scheduling a presentation; Gary agreed.

### Summer Field Day

- Still seeking a Field Day leader for 2026. Members interested are encouraged to come forward – support will be provided.
- The park is already reserved; planning needs to begin.

## 8. Old Business

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- No old business to report.

### Mid-Meeting Presentation:

- Stex, K4IEW, delivered a presentation titled "Comms in Public Events – Supporting Local Public Events."

## 9. New Business

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### Upcoming Events

- Vienna Wireless Winterfest – Sunday, March 15th.
- Virginia QSO Party – March 21st – 22nd.
- Cherry Blossom 5K – April 11th; Cherry Blossom 10-Miler – April 12th.

### Merchandise Update – Sean, K4KBK

- Shirts and hats are available. Shirts are a lighter material than previously; available in white and blue ("Port Authority" brand).
- The ordering website is live and will be sent to the reflector.
- Name tags discussed: Gary recommended Signman. Richard noted the club is already in contact with Signman.

### Club Calendar

- Calendar updates to be distributed – details to follow.

## 10. General Comments

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- Skip, KO2THF: Don has volunteered to lead the effort to arrange presentations for remaining club meetings in 2026.
- Don: A POTA (Parks on the Air) content creator has agreed to present via Zoom video conference at the May meeting.
- Skip suggested possibly scheduling a follow-up build event.
- Richard noted the May meeting is on May 8th.

### Ask an Elmer

- Stex needed to establish a Winlink account – Gary, KC5QCN, will assist.

### DX

- Ian, N8IK, mentioned somewhat rare DX activity: J51A.
- Aaron, K6HLC, mentioned he wrote helper CW software for the Icom 7300. Members interested should reach out to Aaron directly.

## 11. Action Items

Responsible Party	Action Item
Sean, K4KBK	Reserve room for license testing in May.
Jan, KB2LRX	Follow up with Alexandria Public Library re: book donation and photo opportunity.
Jan, KB2LRX	Follow up with Wayne Rash, N4HCR, re: WTOP Field Day publicity collaboration.
Ian, N8IK	Implement fix for expired DMR VPN certificate.
Aaron, K6HLC / Jan, KB2LRX	Send parade photos to Richard, KW4UJ, for the website.
Gary, KC5QCN	Schedule SSTV presentation for a future club meeting.
Gary, KC5QCN	Assist Stex, K4IEW, with setting up a Winlink account.
Don, KI4D	Coordinate speakers/presentations for remaining 2026 club meetings.
All Members	Volunteer to lead Summer Field Day 2026 – contact the club. Planning must begin soon.
All Members Interested	Sign up for Cherry Blossom 5K (Apr 11) and/or 10-Miler (Apr 12) support.

## 12. Adjournment

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- Motion to close formal meeting at 8:35 PM. Meeting adjourned.

*Minutes recorded by: Mike Joyce, KQ4WOI*

*Email questions to [secretary@w4hfh.org](mailto:secretary@w4hfh.org)*

### Detailed Meeting Attendance

*Recorded Attendance, March 13, 2026 ([17 in person], [3 remotely])*

Aaron, K6HLC	Brian, KN4NHM	Don, KI4D	Larry, KQ4SBC	Gary, KC5QCN
Gordon Miller, NQ4K	Ian, N8IK	Jan, KB2LRX	Jay, KV3W	Andrew, KI4THF
Bryan, WD4ADF	Ted, W9TCE	Mike, KQ4WOI	Richard, KW4UJ	Gary, KC7TNU
Sean, K4KBK	Skip, KO2THF	Stex, K4IEW	Bjorn, KC3A00	Alex, K3DCA

## 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:president@w4hfh.org)

<<mailto:vice-president@w4hfh.org>> [vice-president@w4hfh.org](mailto:vice-president@w4hfh.org)

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