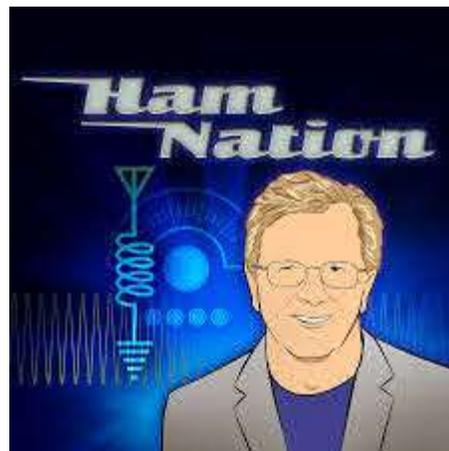




VIRGINIA SECTION HAM RADIO NEWS QSL! #20

December 2020

Powhatan Area Radio Club Featured on Ham Nation!



What is it like to be featured on Ham Nation? Well, I'm sure the Powhatan Area Radio Club can tell you. They were featured on October 28, 2020.

Take a look. Click on the website below. You'll see the Ham Nation Program. They are featured at the 4 minute, 41 second mark:

<https://www.n4pow.com/>



You could go directly to the Ham Nation You Tube page instead:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11IYRtfvUiw>

Either way, enjoy!!! Thanks to Dr. Bob Heil K9EID and Ham Nation for featuring the Little POWERful Amateur Radio Club that Has FUN!

New River Valley Gives Us “The Evil Foxhunt”! Mwahahaha!

By Cam Coble W4XXV

Amid all the protections and social distancing of 2020, I have struggled to think of things that we can do for social gatherings and fun, but still maintain a level of safety for the New River Valley Amateur Radio Club. Activities outdoors seems to be the most promising, and foxhunts (or transmitter hunting) have been a favorite requested activity for our club. This time, I decided to do something a little more special.

I have two transmitter systems that I use for our foxhunts, both of which consist of a battery, controller, and cheap HT contained in a plastic ammo can with an ominous antenna. These are great for covering larger areas, but they are large, and once you get close, they are often found visually for the last leg of the hunt. What I needed was something small, something that would make you push your equipment, skills, and patience to the limit. The search for a cost-effective solution was started in April of 2020.

Transmitter plans using a crystal and a simple PIC controller were found from a documented, but discontinued kit. Accumulation of the necessary parts took part over the course of a few months.

The event was penciled in for November 14th, and as the date came close, it was finalized as the threat of rain was removed, and confirmation of the location was given as Randolph Park in Dublin, VA.



The morning of the 14th was met with 38 degrees, low wind, and a sunny sky. Our event was scheduled as a picnic breakfast (bring your own), followed by the foxhunt to allow our club to remember each other's faces, and welcome any newer hams to the area should they so wish. I arrived early and hid the transmitters along not too difficult a path along the walking paths in the wooded area. The outside shelters at Randolph Park provided the needed physical distancing, and low sun seemed to warm the spirit along with coffee and conversation. Turnout was seven members, with only one not staying for the foxhunt.

A short introduction to some of the equipment and use was given to help those new to the game. I brought along extra equipment since I would be more of the instructor for this event. Two directional Yagi antennas along with radios and 4 MHz offset attenuators were the tools lent for the event. A short demonstration was given as to how to make use of the attenuators. As the demonstration revealed the frequency of the first fox, the hounds were anxious to start the hunt. Then, a hint of the evil of the second fox was given, "you must find the first fox to find the frequency of the second one." The tale continued, "The second fox looks nothing like the first!"

Off they went, sweeping 360 degrees, back and forth, adjusting knobs, reading signal strengths, and pointing in directions. Movements were slow and deliberate as each hound swept back and forth during transmissions, and paces were quickened as the information gathered was given more credence. The sound of the fox taunting them along the way with tones of youth as if to say, "nanny nanny boo boo!" As the first hounds approached the fox, a visual was made, and the first fox was found. The smiles began to show as did the curl of my own evil grin, knowing the second fox is a bit more cunning.

Confidence gained, the hounds read the new frequency, reset their equipment, and listened... "chirp", [pause], "chirp". "Hey, that's not like the other one!" They were right. This fox gave very short bursts of



FM, along with an ID about every 30 seconds. Getting used to the new sounds, the sweeping, reading, and pointing continued again. The skills gained from the first fox were quickly honed for the second, and the hounds were searching well. Seeing them work back and forth around a close area, I knew they were close. I joined to see where the search had led. It seemed to have come to a stop, with puzzled looks on the hounds faces. They showed me, "It's showing right here in the leaves and wood, but I don't see anything." They were right. The one hound rustled the leaves and picked up a piece of wood only to discard it back into the pile. Another observed something odd. Picking it back up revealed some wires hanging out of the end of a hollowed piece of firewood... fox found!

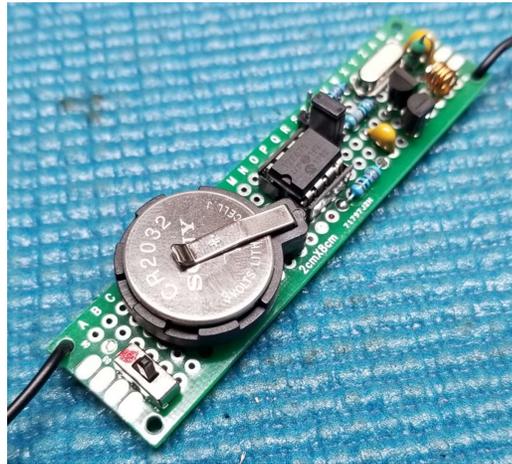
A good time was had by all the hounds, and everyone learned something new. I could not have asked for a better time for a year ending event, nor a better pack of hounds.

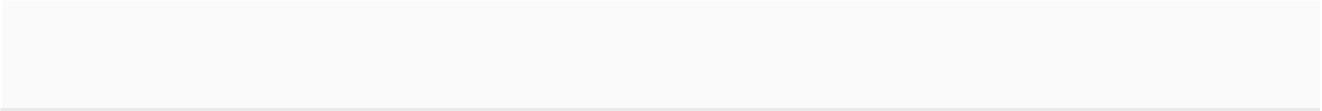
Cam, W₄XXV

Links:

Club: <https://www.n4nrv.org>

Evil fox plans: <http://www.jbgizmo.com/page30.htm>





Zombies Rising Exercise Held on Halloween in Clark County, Washington

"The annual Leonid meteor shower arrived several days ago, about a week earlier than normal. The meteoroid particle stream of frozen gases entered the Earth's atmosphere as meteors and dissipated their primordial goo over Clark County, which mixed with the rain as it fell to the ground. Wherever this mixture seeped into the soil at a burial location, the undead began to rise." So began the scenario for the 2020 Simulated Emergency Test (SET) held on Halloween by [Clark County ARES/RACES](#).

The idea of using zombies in an exercise was brought to the group by Toby Clairmont, KH7FR, who had successfully used this type of scenario in an "all hazards" communications exercise in Hawaii. His idea developed into an activity that had ARES members traveling to 50 burial locations in the county and radioing in situation reports (number of zombies observed, direction of travel, and approximate speed). If met at the cemetery by a representative of that "served agency" (played by volunteers from the Clark County Genealogical Society and the Clark County Historical Cemetery Foundation), ICS-213 forms and Radiograms were also transmitted. The [EYEWARN](#) program, sponsored by the Clark County Amateur Radio Club, spun up a separate coordinated net for non-ARES hams to give zombie sighting reports from their homes.

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, adaptations to a standard exercise plan had to be made. All members who were always not operating from their home needed to wear face masks, because air currents can carry zombie pathogens, and there is no known cure for zombieism. Members at fixed locations were advised to not locate their portable station under a structure where zombies could reach down and grab them. Fortunately, no ARES members were infected by zombies during the exercise.

Several new (at least to the organization) processes were tried during this SET. Recent training included the use of tone squelch on members' radios, and this was tested during the initial callout using an alternate tone on the repeater. Net control was divided between three local repeaters, each of which favored a different area of the county. Locations that had never before been visited by members tested their ability to understand the county address numbering scheme and to either read maps or use a GPS navigation system.

Michael Barnhart, AE7GQ, who just became EC/RO for Clark County in August 2020, experienced his first SET in his new position. He indicated that while he was generally pleased with the exercise, not all went as expected, and the



organization now has a list of items where new protocols need to be developed and documented and where new and refresher training may be necessary.

- *Steve Aberle, WA7PTM, ARRL Official Emergency Station, Western Washington Section*

Tulsa County, Oklahoma Conducts SET on a Severe Weather Scenario

On Saturday, October 3, 2020 the Tulsa County ARES organization conducted its annual Simulated Emergency Test. Using guidelines from Section Emergency Coordinator Mark Conklin, N7XYO, the group prepared a multi-faceted exercise based upon a severe weather scenario with impact across the county. The principal objective of the exercise was to test the suitability of a newly configured Emergency Communications trailer for Incident Command and Net Control points. The trailer is funded by the Tulsa Amateur Radio Club, W5IAS.

Key aspects of the 2020 SET:

- Resource Net: this net is where volunteers first checked in and received tasking orders. Some volunteers were tasked to change frequencies and check in on other nets for assignments. Other resources were giving specific tasks to work and report back.
- Command Net: this net is reserved as the main communications frequency between Incident Command and served agencies. The resource net and command net operated out of the emergency communications trailer on generator power. Ray Young, K5CFY, and Russ Doden, KF5UZG, functioned as net control operators (NCO).
- Tulsa Area Emergency Management Agency (TAEMA) net: a tactical net with assigned volunteers dispatched to specific locations and purpose. The TAEMA NCO operated from the Emergency Operations Center in downtown Tulsa. James Plumlee, KI5DAZ, functioned as NCO. TAEMA is the group's principal served agency.
- Digital Net: a Winlink net was set up to send and receive digital messaging during the exercise period. NCO for the Winlink net was Jeff Scoville, AE5ME.
- All four nets operated simultaneously once the incident briefing was given on-air and the resource net was established.
- ICS documentation: The ICS 205 comms plan was published ahead of the exercise to allow operators programming time. All activity was recorded on ICS 214s.



• Exercise briefing: a comprehensive exercise briefing was published to the NCOs ahead of the event.

COVID-19 had a big impact on the SET this year. Organizers restricted the number of people at the net control points to maintain proper social distancing. All volunteers were advised to adhere to CDC guidelines for sanitization, masks, and social distancing. As a result, the majority of volunteers participated via on-air communications.

Lessons Learned

• Equipment will fail, and you need a plan to mitigate the impact of that. One of the dual-band radios in the trailer failed during the initial phases of the exercise and was replaced quickly to keep the net control function on the air. It's important to have a backup plan for every aspect of your exercise.

• Running simultaneous nets can be somewhat confusing. This is solved through comprehensive communications ahead of the exercise. Also, training will help build "muscle memory" among the volunteer population and everyone will know to start on the resource net.

• Multiple NCOs in a trailer produce a lot of noise that can interfere with accurate message transmission and confirmations. This will be solved by purchasing headphones for each NCO station.

In summary, the 2020 SET was a success and accomplished all objectives. Thirty-two operators participated throughout the 2-hour exercise including communications with other ARES groups operating in adjacent counties. We also saw Winlink communications with ARES organizations in the state and between adjacent states. -- *Paul Teel, WB5ANX, ARES Emergency Coordinator, Tulsa County, Oklahoma, and Incident Commander for the 2020 SET*



On Thursday morning (November 19.2020) Fairfax County ARES/AUXCOMM briefed the NCR/Fairfax County Comms Cache on our capabilities and our partnerships. The brief was well received & the cache members in attendance seemed interested. We demonstrate our ability to quickly deploy both HF & VHF antenna systems and get up and running in under 15 minutes & we demonstrated HF Winlink, VHF Winlink and the PiGate Safe & Well outbound email solution

Submitted by Brendan O'Neill KM4HRR



VDF and Hams: Atten-hut!

This past weekend (November 8-9), the Virginia Defense Force conducted HIGHLAND GUARDIAN, a communications exercise that simulated an emergency response to a natural disaster in the Commonwealth.

VDF units participated from Richmond (DSCR), Virginia Beach (Camp Pendleton SMR), and from National Guard Readiness Centers in Lynchburg, Warrenton, Winchester, Fairfax, and Cedar Bluff. Joining the exercise were amateur radio operators from Fairfax ARES and Loudoun ARES using WINLINK (HF PACTOR, VHF, Telnet) and on 60m HF SSB.

In all, 79 pieces of traffic were passed and voice communications were accomplished on STARS, VHF, and various HF bands with SSB and ALE.

Congratulations to all for an exceptional effort.

WO1 (VA) Kevin Maxson (FCC: AK2M)

OIC, 4th Detachment - Richmond

Communication Battalion

Virginia Defense Force

<https://VDF.Virginia.gov>

Arizona Congresswoman Introduces National Amateur Radio Operators Day Resolution

US Representative Debbie Lesko of Arizona has introduced a [resolution](#) to designate April 18, 2021, as National Amateur Radio Operators Day, to recognize the important contributions of amateur radio operators.



"Amateur radio operators are critical in times of crisis and our communities are safer thanks to their dedication to sharing important information with the public," Lesko said. She was approached to introduce the resolution by 12-year-old Raymond, N7KCB, from Peoria, Arizona.

"I started [Long Distance Responders](#) so I can help prepare the community for emergencies with amateur radio," said Raymond. "There might be a price for a radio, but the ability and knowledge to help someone is truly priceless."

As Lesko's resolution notes, World Amateur Radio Day (WARD) is celebrated annually on April 18 to commemorate the founding of the International Amateur Radio Union ([IARU](#))



in 1925, and she said her resolution recognizes the amateur radio community with a national day in the United States in 2021. The resolution cites the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES®) for providing "invaluable emergency communications services following recent natural disasters, including but not limited to helping coordinate disaster relief efforts following Hurricanes Katrina, Wilma, and Maria and other extreme weather disasters."

Ole Virginia Hams

Update: OVH Laptops will be used by shelter kids for classes

Ken Brant November 15, 2020

On October 27th, OVH once again stepped up for the community and donated 9 more computers.

This brings our total to 20 usable computers donated. We are not counting the 4 donated laptops that were unusable and gifted to eAsset Solutions Computer and Electronics Recycling of Falls Church.

A reminder: 11 laptops were donated by OVH to Gracing Spaces (<https://www.gracingspaces.com>) on August 31. They, in turn, presented those computers to Fairfax County Social Services for use by the children in their shelters.

With regard to this round, seven of those nine computers were laptops.

We would like to recognize Art, W1CRO; Butch, W4HJL; AL, KB4BHB; and John, KG4NXT for those laptops.

The remaining two computers were Windows 10 desktop machines. Theresa, KG4TVM "re-gifted" these two machines after acquiring them from a friend.

After taking delivery of the nine devices from John, KG4NXT, I once again booted all of the machines, removed any need for credentials (login & passwords), any radio related software and any personal data.

I then contacted Gracing Spaces again to see if they could use our newly sanitized computers. I was informed they no longer had a need, so I approached FACETS (<http://FacetsCares.org>).

I was able to speak with Allison Coles, Director of Development & Communications at FACETS, about their need for computers for this

year's Hypothermia program.



“The Other Ken”, KN4DD donating computers at FACETS

Because of OVH’s continued generosity, I was able to transfer all 9 computers to FACETS along with their attendant keyboards, monitors, power bricks & power cords.

It is because of your unselfishness and charitableness that OVH continues to make a difference in our community.

Very 73,
“The Other Ken”
KN4DD



Scouts On The Air: Old Virginia Hams

John Heartney October 19, 2020

On Saturday, October 17, OVH ran Jamboree-on-the-Air (or JOTA) at Camp Snyder in Haymarket, VA. One of our members, ROB (W4FSK) was our liaison with the scout camp and was also in charge of the camp that day. We had a troop of boys, a second one of girls and a third troop of Muslim boys. Rob estimates the OVH volunteers worked with about 50 scouts and their leaders, just at Camp Snyder. The scouts that made contacts were given signed contact cards that they can then use for partial credit for several merit badges.

John (KG4NXT) brought his IC-7610 so we could have a digital station and both Al, (KB4BHB) and “The Other Ken” (KN4DD) brought their 2-meter mobile stations. The digital station ran FT8 and worked European, Caribbean and US stations. Looking at PSKReporter, the digital station was also heard in Antarctica and the Philippines. After Al’s station suffered a malfunction, Ken (KN4DD) ran a 2-meter FM station out of his truck and was very popular. He had his scouts contact Gil (KM4OZH) at his farm in Amissville, VA via the 97 repeater. Gil had rigged a speaker on top of his car so he could do farm work but also hear when he was needed. When Gil became unavailable due to his work, Ken also contacted another JOTA group in Centreville which was run by Jim (KN4ELI). When there were no scouts lined up outside his truck, Ken talked to the scouts in Centreville. Ken also had scouts in his truck talk directly to the scouts in Centreville. This was a form of “self-preservation” as there were about 30 scouts there, mostly Girl Scouts.

There was one Girl Scout interest in sideband. Ron (K3FR) changed the FT8 setup to sideband and worked with her for over a half hour.

AL (KB4BHB) arrived early at 8 AM and helped with setup.

Theresa (KG4TVM) made a hotdog lunch for OVH volunteers and also took the photos below.

We had several OVH members that volunteered to help but were unable to do so. George (K4GVT) needed to be home to meet contractors. Don

(WA2SWX) had his DMR and hotspot packed up but had to take his dad to the hospital at the last minute. Wayne (N7QLK) had volunteered for a late afternoon spot, but the schedule changed at the last minute and we asked him to stay home.



November 5, 2020

Hand-held new law

As you may remember the “distracted driver” law currently in effect was for just work zones and amateur radio was not an exception to the law.

This last legislature session passed a new version of the state law (H 874 on March 10, 2020) that applies to the whole state. The good news is that amateur radio is now exempt from the law. **Here is a link to the new law (yellow highlights are mine).**

While the law normally would have started July 1st, the governor delayed it till 01/01/2021. Also be aware that the city of Richmond has their own law, and it applies to amateur radio. It is unclear (I am not a lawyer) if the state law supersedes the city law or not. I’ll update this as we find out more information.

Fairfax County ARES/RACES/AUXCOMM



A volunteer Auxiliary & Emergency Radio Communications group serving agencies and our partners in the Washington DC National Capital Region.

Fairfax County ARES/RACES/AUXCOMM is happy to announce a new web site is now up and running. Point your favorite browser to:
aresfairfax.org

This site went live today - 27-NOV-2020 thanks in no small part to our newest AEC - Web Master Darwin Mach - K4HAX. Thank you, Darwin, This is a work in progress. If you refresh every 10 mins you may well see changes taking place live today and tonight. Eventually this will be a slightly different site as more and more features and content get added. Stay tuned for great things to come to both this web site and the larger ARES/RACES/AUXCOMM effort in the National Capital Region.

Respectfully & 73,
Brendan KM4HRR



SELLING AMATEUR NEWS

By Dwight M. Rohr, W4SPJ-PIO

Certified Radio Marketing Consultant, retired

Amateur Radio Operators might not think of themselves as salespeople, but that is exactly what you do when you set up a 'Public Event's Station'. One, that is open for all to see. Just being present and showing spectators how amateur radio works is done through relationship selling.

Relationship selling that answers spectators, the press, advertisers desire, "What's in it for me? This has proven to be the most effective method of getting results. Let us face it, we are a results-oriented society whether its pitching a feature or news story for publication on 'Ham' radio, selling widgets or whatever. The public, in whatever occupational capacity wants to be an Amateur Radio Operator, they just do not know it yet. We are here to tell them.

Back in 1969 when cable television was a new industry, I was a high school student who went door to door selling over-the-air TV stations on the cable in a metropolitan area. The sales were tough and over the air stations really required only 'rabbit ears' or a home mounted antenna, so why would you buy cable? There were no cable news, sports, and movie channels at that time.

While my fellow salespeople were using hard sell tactics to sell cable subscriptions, I used relationship selling. Knocking at each door I would introduce myself and asked if the customer saw all the work going on the utility poles? After piquing their interest and showing how cable was going to make viewing much more enjoyable; I signed them up and thanked them for the sale; then went on to the next house and repeated the scenario.

The proof that relationship selling works is that while my sales companions were making some sales on bold-hard tactics, I received all the sales bonus money every single paycheck! The same approach will work when you pitch a story on Amateur radio.



When I first got involved in my community there was only one station with poor signals from out of town. There was also one newspaper for my city. Today, that same station is competing with scores of other high powered, metropolitan broadcast outlets. There are a host of other electronic news outlets competing for the same and often a smaller customer base.

Develop that relationship with each news outlet. You may not get each manager out for coffee and doughnuts, but each are competitive and get upset when they are slighted. Public awareness is vital to the survival of amateur radio; make sure you earn the respect that will get you the press you need.

-73 Dwight Rohr, W4SPJ

VA Section Leadership Team Appointments

Dr. Joe Palsa K3WRY proudly announces the appointment of John Best KC4MEC as VA Section Webmaster. John has extensive IT experience, is a leader for the Ocean Park Volunteer Rescue Squad in VA Beach, an ARES member, and AuxComm trained. John's main responsibilities are the new VA Section website and the VA ARES website. All are being developed as this is being written. Section leadership and members will have a chance to give their ideas for the websites. Dr. Palsa has appointed Ed Gibbs KW4GF as an Assistant Section Manager as well as the Section PIC. Ed will assist in the daily operations of the Section as well as report progress to Dr. Palsa on a weekly basis.



VA ARES Leaders Meet

VA ARES Leadership met on Wednesday December 2 ,2020 .to discuss the following:

Glen Sage N4DN discussed the Winter SET exercise.

Kevin Maxson AK2M discussed the VA Defense Force Highland Guardian exercise with Loudoun and Fairfax ARES.

John Best KC4MEC rolled out the new VA Section website which will be available soon.

A discussion of the Strategic Plan.

Finding new DEC's for Districts 2,3, and 4.

As the leadership agreed to participate in the Winter SET, they will meet in mid-February to give their after -action reports.



**VA Section Clubs and ARES Groups: Please support
“The Big ONE”**

***Operation "The Big One"
January 16, 2021
0800 until 1400 Hours***



Operation "The Big One" is a scenario of a 7.7 earthquake in the active seismic area of the Mountain Lake area of Giles County Virginia. Major damage would be experienced in Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Pearsburg and Radford Virginia. There is possible damage to the aging Claytor Lake Dam near Pulaski Virginia. This lake is 115 deep, 27.7 miles long and covers 4472 acres. This stands on the New River.

This places all communities along New River downstream from the Claytor Lake at risk of catastrophic flooding. This also includes the Radford Arsenal which employs thousands of people. Virginia Tech and Radford University would experience major damage.

Internet service, phone service and power has been lost over about a 30-mile radius from the epic center of the quake. Communications support will be needed from throughout the Commonwealth.

We are asking that all long-haul traffic use Winlink to send their traffic. Local traffic may be sent via voice, digital or CW. If you don't have Winlink skills or equipment, please send your traffic to a station from your area that can send your Winlink traffic for you, Do not use Telenet for Winlink traffic.

This year no "canned traffic" will be prepared for you. You must prepare your own traffic based on the scenario of a massive power outage, loss of phone service and Internet service in the impact area. I will be sending a number of messages to each participant that will require a reply. Please send a generous amount of traffic to stations in your local or regional area. Remember that at least 80% of all traffic will be local in nature in a real disaster. You will have Winlink contact information on all radio amateurs that are participating in the exercise so you will have a large number of people that you can send traffic. Please use ICS-213 General Message forms for all formal traffic. Use ICS-205 forms that you send to me so that it can be posted and people that want to contact you can know how to route their traffic. Keep a log if you wish to complete an ARRL or AUXCOMM taskbook (these are two different taskbooks with different requirements). This log documentation should be a help in getting tasks approved for sections of your taskbooks. The ICS log is ICS-309. This log can be found at the "Exercise Forms" button on the links on the left side of this page.

Simulated Emergency Test "Operation The Big One"

Most areas beyond 50 miles from the center of Giles County will have Internet, power and phone service. Your VHF gateways and repeaters should be up and running. Communications into and out of the affected area will be relying on Amateur Radio. All repeaters on the Bald Knob (Mountain Lake) section of Giles County would be out of operation.

VHF/UHF voice remains the most efficient way for your local short traffic.

BE SURE TO INCLUDE "THIS IS A DRILL, THIS IS A TEST" on all traffic.

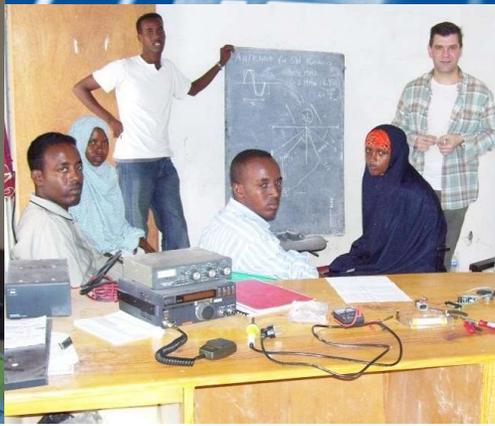
DUE TO COVID-19 MOST ALL STATIONS WILL BE OPERATING FROM HOME OR A COMMUNICATIONS TRAILER. THESE WILL ALL SIMULATE OPERATING ON BEHALF OF AN AGENCY. IN YOUR REGISTRATION SPECIFY IF YOU ARE OPERATING FROM YOU HOME.

If you have questions, contact me,

Glen Sage, N4DN
N4DN@arrl.net
276-398-3548

Happiness and Ham Radio Around the World Happy Holidays!





Patricia KEoQXD
OMIK AREA o Director

What is your club doing? Please let me know and I'll publicize it. And if you don't send me your news, I'll try to FIND IT!LOL! 73 de KW4GF



Ed Gibbs KW₄GF

ARRL VA Section Public Information Coordinator

[KW₄GF@ARRL.net](mailto:KW4GF@ARRL.net)

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