

Williamsburg Amateur Radio Club's Satellite Fun Day!

Williamsburg Area Amateur Radio Club (WAARC) members have been busy recently learning and re-learning ham skills about Fox Hunting and Satellite operating. Club member Randy Pryor WB7URZ recently volunteered to organize both activities by offering his expertise to help newcomers and old timers alike have fun and learn something new. Randy revived his own Fox Hunt transmitter and began placing the Fox in the Yorktown area and immediately a number of club members decided to join in the Covid-safe activity. Fox Hunting equipment ranged from simple HTs to homebrew Yagi antennas with hidden transmitters that operating on both 2m and 70cm. Randy also introduced hunters to the Offset Attenuator, an inexpensive addition that helps a hunter who is very close to the transmitter as even without an antenna a receiver can be overwhelmed in close proximity to the Fox. Two other members have since purchased their own foxes and the opportunities to chase the foxes is becoming more and more popular. The equipment and skill set are important ones to have in tracking down errant signals that may interfere with both ham, commercial and emergency responder communications; the good news is you can have lots of fun learning and sharpening those skills.

Randy has been busy also making several presentations at the club's "Hour of Power" which is held before every monthly meeting that focuses on our newest hams and specialized topics such as the Ham shack Hotline VoIP ham-only phone system that many members have installed at their QTH's.

Club members have also begun chasing amateur satellites and learning the ins-andouts of using simple antennas and HTs to contact the "birds" and the International Space Station. In 2014 WAARC conducted a ARISS event for a Williamsburg middle school where 10 students were able to ask questions of and get direct answers from a ham-astronaut on the ISS via club member equipment. The recent activity has spurred new and renewed interest in satellite/ISS operating among members.

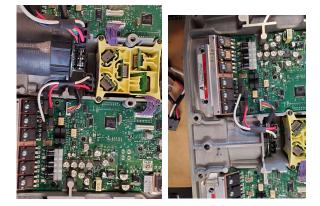
The club continues their "Coffee and Radio Net" that meets daily at 9:00 am on the Williamsburg KB4ZIN 146.76 repeater. The net began in mid-March 2020 as a means to let club members and hams in the surrounding area keep in touch during the pandemic. Net topics range from vector network analyzers all the way to combatting vermin in the garden. To date the net has operated over for almost 300 straight days with over 180 unique call signs that have checked in; these include club members, visitors and hams from surrounding towns and counties averaging more than 20 per day. Many members even monitor the net using the Broadcastify app on their phones and tablets while traveling so as not to miss a net.

For more info about WAARC check out their web page at <u>k4rc.net</u>.



Great Pic isn't it!







Randy WB7URZ shows dad Loren KO4EZI how to "hunt the fox" with his HT



WAARC members (L-R Moritz K4MRZ, Robert N1PAX , and Wally WA3RWP at Yorktown chasing satellite contacts hosted by Randy WB7URZ



Grandad Randy KM4YSN helps granddaughter Solana N4SOL track the fox on 440 MHz



Mom and daughter hams Mari Ann KD4SGC and Solana N4SOL celebrate success after finding the fox.



Youth on The Air (YOTA)

The entire month of December several youngsters became active with YOTA as suffix in the callsign. The idea for this is to show the amateur radio hobby to youth and to encourage youngsters to be active on the ham radio waves.

Give a demonstration in a school or local club, gather together with your friends, grab a pizza and make some QSOs or enjoy a great pile-up. Let us all show this great hobby to the world!

Feel free to make a QSO with the youngsters during YOTA Month, they are happy to get some attention and exchange information. Licensed and unlicensed youth will be making QSOs, be aware this could be their first radio contact ever and give them a chance to experience a possible new hobby.

YOTA month was December and the USA stations K8Y K8O K8T and K8A made:

K8A - 2718 K8O - 3384 K8T - 2552 K8Y - 6028

Total: 14,682 QSOs

47 stations participated from around the world with YOTA suffixes in their callsigns making a total of 128,351 QSOs from December 1st to the 31st!

Statistics can be viewed at https://events.ham-yota.com/stats

Reprinted from the YOTA Website with contributions from Connor Black W4IPC

Vienna Wireless Society's Virtual Hamfest-April 24,2021

What a LINEUP! Don't Miss it!!!!!

The largest regional amateur radio event this year is 24 April on zoom: the ARRL Virginia Section Conference hosted by Vienna Wireless Society and ARRL. Over a dozen exciting and qualified speakers create entertaining, educational, and relevant content. Attend any session in three exciting tacks focusing on new and returning hams, Hot Topics, and ARES/AUXCOMM. This will be the only event of its type this year. Don't miss it. Go to: <u>https://viennawireless.net/wp/events/winterfest/</u>

Lynchburg ARC: Finding Out Where the Hams ARE!

This "project" was a way to use too much time in front of the computer rather than being on the air :-)

It has always fascinated me on how many hams there are on QRZ, yet we really don't know who they are or the reason why they had interest in the hobby. In our Lynchburg area many Central Virginia Community College students enrolled in Electrical Engineering courses have been offered credit for obtaining a ham license and that accounts for many of the sequential call signs we see that are expiring. It was my hope that some active members of LARC would see a familiar name on the list and make personal contact to encourage a renewal, especially now that it is still FREE and can be done on line at the FCC web page <u>https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/support/common-amateur-filingtasks/common-amateur-filing-task-renewing-license#block-menu-block-</u> <u>4</u> Most of the QRZ entries don't have e-mail addresses to allow direct contact. I find very few expiring licenses from active hams.

I also thought there might be some neat call signs becoming available for newer hams. And the identification of the Silent Keys would bring back memories we had forgotten.

The process I used needs to be improved:

Using QRZ, search by Name/Address. Enter the zip code, and you get a list of local hams. Click on each one to see the details. In my case if the call was expiring within 7 months, I added it to the list. Using copy and paste the QRZ data was saved to another document.

I did find a few bios on QRZ that were very interesting to read. They had great ideas about antennas, rigs, and their other interests other than ham radio.

HNY 73 Pete W4WWQ

PS: Probably more than 40 years ago our club attempted to send postcards to many hams in our area that were on a list from the ARRL. There were expenses for material and postage and results were less than hoped for.

"Expired licenses in Amherst zip code 24521, Appomattox zip code 24522, Altavista zip code 24517

Pete W4WWQ

Zip code 24521 KC4UIT DAVID G AUSTIN Amherst VA 2021-04-12 KD4ARV TROY R NIPPER AMHERST VA 2021-05-19 KD4CQW LINZY O EVANS, JR AMHERST VA 2021-07-09 W4AEX ARTHUR L RICHARDS, JR AMHERST VA



Zip code 24522

KE4TR JOHN W EWERS, JR APPOMATTOX VA2021-07-30KF4SKN LISA A FRANKLIN APPOMATTOX VAKF4TCD KENNETH L FRANKLIN APPOMATTOX VAKG4POY Amy K Bates Appomattox VAKG4POY Amy K Bates Appomattox VAKG4VLK Justin N Harvey Appomattox VAKG4VTB Nicholas L Waddell Appomattox VAKI4CMT Ollie T Harris, Jr Appomattox VAKJ4EEH Clark R Brown Appomattox VAKJ4EJR Lorenzo R Saenz Appomattox VAKJ4IGD JOHN F DAVIDS, SR APPOMATTOX VA

Zip code 24517 KB4OYC BUNNY F WOODSON ALTAVISTA VA KE4ISF KEITH A AGUILA ALTAVISTA VA KF4CQY MYRON E WILLIAMSON ALTAVISTA VA KF4UKL JUNE C CARPENTER ALTAVISTA VA N4NB JOHN P BARNARD ALTAVISTA VA SK N6HIK CARL T WILLIAMS Altavista VA 2021-04-28"

Central Virginia Repeater Association: Service with A Smile! 😊

The Central Virginia Repeater Association (CVRA) - <u>https://www.wr4cv.net/</u> - is an ARRL affiliated club consisting of licensed amateur radio operators whose members maintain an extensive radio repeater system serving central Virginia. Along with emergency response services we also make ourselves available for public service to provide communications for running and/or biking events throughout the region. Our full-time linked repeater system provides coverage throughout central Virginia with most sites being located along the Blue Ridge Parkway, and a central "hub" located on Wintergreen Mountain. The hub frequency is



444.550 + offset 136.5 tone and provides command and control for all the connected repeaters:

146.820 – offset 136.5 tone in analog mode, System Fusion in digital mode (no Wires-X) also on Wintergreen Mtn.,

145.450 - offset 136.5 tone located at the Whetstone Ridge ranger station on the BRP,

444.750 + offset 136.5 tone located on Rocky Mountain (where Amherst, Nelson and Rockbridge Counties meet, north of Rt.60 and east of BRP),

444.950 + offset 136.5 tone in analog mode and System Fusion with Wires-X in digital mode located on Tobacco Row Mountain just north of Lynchburg,

146.955 - offset 136.5 tone located in Farmville on the water tower, and

443.300 + offset 136.5 tone located in Farmville on the water tower.

We also provide digital services via:

APRS digi-peaters located on Wintergreen and Buck's Elbow Mtns.

WinLink VHF Gateway 145.070 AX.25, FX.25 (AX.25 with FEC (Forward Error Correction)), and VARA FM (NARROW) located on Wintergreen Mtn.,

WinLink UHF Gateway 441.075 MHz VARA FM (WIDE) located on Wintergreen Mtn.,

WinLink digi-peater located on Rocky Mtn. (connects to WinLink Gateway on Wintergreen),

And also on Wintergreen Mtn. a mixed mode analog/digital repeater 444.4375 + offset 136.5 tone in analog mode, which also supports System Fusion with Wires-X, D-Star (wr4cv-b wr4cv-g) and APCO P25 in digital modes.

Our latest addition is a 2M remote base located on Rocky Mtn. that allows us to connect our linked system to various simplex frequencies and to other repeaters such as:

The NWS repeater system in Blacksburg/Roanoke (and Richmond for backup) in the event of weather-related emergencies, and to



CVRA (con't)

The Lynchburg Amateur Radio Club (LARC), and Albemarle Amateur Radio Club (AARC) repeaters for cooperative public service functions as well as emergency situations.

Some of our members have repeaters located throughout Albemarle, Greene and Augusta Counties that are not tied into the linked system but are available for use as needed.

Since some of our members have extensive backgrounds in radio communications our services extend well beyond just amateur radio activities. Nelson County is our main area of service with assistance provided to adjacent counties when requested. We work very closely with Nelson County Emergency Services and have a seat on their Emergency Services Council. As such we have been able to assist them with many problems:

Nelson County E.S. uses a digital radio system with analog for fire/rescue paging. Montebello F/D was experiencing difficulty in receiving fire pages due to the terrain topography and the limited capability of the small paging receivers. We assisted them with locating and programming analog Kenwood portables that had paging receive and alert capabilities. The larger antenna on the portable resolved their issues with missed fire calls.

Wintergreen Mtn. Fire/Rescue had a repeater failure at their main transmit site. We responded rapidly with a spare repeater that was placed into service while we repaired their failed repeater. We also provided them with a backup repeater and instructed them as to how to make the swap (2 cables) if this should occur again.

The Wintergreen Fire Chief expressed a concern about a situation that occurred in Gatlinburg, Tn. where a large fire moved up the mountain and damaged a main repeater site. We worked closely with him to build a portable trailer complete with lights, generator, and a repeater system with a crank up antenna that can be quickly deployed to any location in Nelson County.

The Nelson County main EOC is located in the town of Lovingston with the Wintergreen Dispatch center as a backup. We assisted them with installing a new EOC



CVRA (con't)

in the F/D conference room at Nellysford complete with radios, roof mounted antennae and Internet connectivity. Now they have three complete, fully functional EOC's that can handle 911 calls and full dispatch capabilities with the ability to switch between them as necessary in an emergency.

Our next Wintergreen project is at their request for a Traveler's Information System – you know those signs that you see on the highway to "Tune Your AM Radio To xxx". This project is in the early planning stage but has been put on hold due to the dang old virus, but we are looking forward to installing an AM transmitter on the mountain as we complete this project. In the meantime, they know that we are there for them.

CVRA may be contacted at: cvrahams at gmail dot com.

District 1 ARES Members Test Their Limits. George Starke, WB4VWR, DEC District 1

Some of the radio operators from District 1 in the Richmond area recently tested their capabilities to communicate in the event there were no repeaters.

The plan started with the Chesterfield ARES group in 2019. The Chesterfield group has developed a very strong relationship with local emergency management officials. The county EOC has two operating positions set up for emergencies.

The county has very strict procedures to access the EOC. But they have allowed the ARES team to conduct some nets from the center. This has proven beneficial to test the operation of the equipment and enable the team to see what type of coverage was available with simplex operation. The first test was conducted in 2019 and was simply an attempt to call all stations that had checked in the on the local repeater with a simplex frequency. That test gave us an idea of who could reach the EOC in the event we lost the local repeater.

This year we conducted the test with improvements. We had two operators in the EOC and used a prepared list of operators who are active in the Chesterfield ARES group.



After the net was called and established, David, KN4LQN (EC Chesterfield) switched to the simplex frequency and everyone in the net switched to that frequency. George, WB4VWR (DEC District 1) stayed on the normal net repeater frequency to accept late check-ins and direct them to the simplex frequency.

Each station was asked to respond if the EOC was heard. In addition, each station was asked to keep a record of any other simplex station they could hear and a signal report. An email was sent out after the event asking for the requested information and KN4LQN then created a google map displaying the results. A link to that map is <u>here</u>.

Chesterfield County officials have approved quarterly tests from the EOC so we can see what effect the different seasons have on propagation.

KK4IUH, Jim (EC Powhatan) decided to conduct the test with the larger group of District 1 ARES operators. His procedure is documented below.

"We will begin on the repeater and check-in all stations as we normally do. Instead of taking your comments, this week Net Control will call on each station to make a 60 second simplex transmission on 146.400 no tone, no offset, at you best power setting. During the transmission, all other stations should listen on 146.400 for the calling station. All Stations please keep a record of the stations you can hear and note, Loud & Clear, Noisy but Readable, or Unreadable for each station. We will compile the results of this exercise and send to all participants.

If you don't have a dual-channel radio, I suggest you program the 146.880 repeater and the 146.400 (Simplex) in back-to-back memories to make it easy to switch between the two frequencies we will be using for this exercise. Also open your squelch so you can hear weak stations".

As you can see on the map, we have a large group registered for this exercise. The Net will run as long as necessary to allow all stations the opportunity to participate. Please join us Thursday at 19:00 on the 88.

A link to the survey is in <u>here</u>.

A link to the results map is <u>here</u>.

We were all impressed in just how many stations could hear other stations and are encouraged to know we can set up relays if needed.



The next test is going to include Winlink P2P messages to plan for relay paths we will need for reliable communications if the worst happens.

Anyone needing more information about these tests, please contact George, <u>wb4vwr@arrl.net</u>, David, <u>kn4lqn@arrl.net</u>, or Jim, <u>kk4iuh@comcast.net</u>.

SB QST @ ARL \$ARLB003 ARLB003 FCC Invites Comments on Expanding the Number of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators

ZCZC AG03 QST de W1AW ARRL Bulletin 3 ARLB003 From ARRL Headquarters Newington CT January 8, 2021 To all radio amateurs

SB QST ARL ARLB003

ARLB003 FCC Invites Comments on Expanding the Number of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators

In a January 5 Public Notice, the FCC requested comments on whether the current 14 Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (VECs) are sufficient to facilitate the efforts of their accredited Volunteer Examiners (VEs) in administering amateur radio examinations. The ARRL VEC is the largest of the 14 VECs in the US. Comments are due by February 5, and reply comments are due by February 19. After Congress authorized it to do so, the FCC adopted rules in 1983 to allow volunteers to prepare and administer amateur radio examinations, and it established the system of VECs and VEs.

The Public Notice can be found online in PDF format at, <u>https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-21-9A1.pdf</u>.

"VECs introduced consistency into the volunteer examiner program by centralizing accreditation of volunteer examiners, coordinating the dates and times for scheduling examinations, and managing the various administrative tasks arising from examinations," the FCC said. Authorized VECs may operate in any of the 13 VEC regions but must service at least one region. The FCC pointed out that some VEC's now offer remote examinations.

"The Commission has long maintained 14 VECs and now seeks to consider whether they continue to serve the evolving needs of the amateur community, or whether there are unmet needs that warrant considering expanding the number of VECs."

The FCC Public Notice provided questions for framing comments:

* Are the existing 14 VECs sufficient to coordinate the efforts of Volunteer Examiners in preparing and administering examinations for amateur radio operator licenses, or are additional VECs needed?

* What needs are currently being met, and which needs, if any, are not?

* If the FCC were to allow additional VECs, how many more would be needed to satisfy existing Amateur Radio Service license examination needs? (The FCC indicated that it will likely cap the number of additional VECs at five.)

* Given that VECs use a collaborative process to create examination question pools and volunteer examination administration protocols, would additional VECs enhance or hinder this process?

* How would increasing the number of VECs address the unmet needs, if any, of the amateur radio community, and what obstacles or complications could result from increasing the number of VECs?

Interested parties may file short comments on WT Docket No. 21-2 via the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing Service (Express) at, <u>https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/filings/express</u>.

Visit the FCC's "How to Comment on FCC Proceedings" page for information on filing extended comments at, <u>https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/how-comment</u>. NNNN Top of the Mind Awareness By Dwight M. Rohr, W4SPJ Virginia Mountain ARC

You walk-up to a stranger and ask them what is Amateur Radio, what response would you get from them? Ham radio has been around since the turn of the 20th Century, so chances are "that was the old radio my grandfather use to talk on around the world.'

Over the many decades, Amateurs have made the news with subjects that include communications during disaster, communications and power failures and wide range of public service events. But can the public bring to the top of their minds all that Amateur Radio does as a hobby or aide to public service agencies?

To obtain 'top of the mind awareness.' PIO's need to be pitching story ideas that include the mention of Amateur Radio on a near daily basis. We have been taught back in grade school that memorization of the names of people, places and things are paramount in reaching our goals. But camping out each day on the front step of the media is not practical. The news and public service departments are interested in 'the hook,' what will catch and hold their attention. Then they are weighed into other stories according to importance and timing.

Enter Social Media...a way you can talk everyday about your hobby and benefits, in such a way that you will be welcomed into the home and office. But do define a need or reason someone would want to read your post, every day and in every way!

We have discovered that even as good as the public and private weather organizations are, they do not give the detailed information to the residents of the Alleghany Highlands of Virginia. The nearest reporting station is in Hot Springs, VA. There is a difference of about ten degrees from Covington to there not mention different humidity, wind, and barometer readings. Weather



radar skims across mountain tops and does not detect weather in the mountain valleys.

The niche we have found successful is producing our own local weather on Social Media prior to 6 AM each day. It looks like a weather report you would read from a wire service:

THE W4SPJ WEATHER STATION REPORT Saturday, January 9, 2021 WX Observations at 4:17 AM from Covington, VA Skies are fair this morning over Virginia's Western Gateway. The temperature and wind chill stand at 30*. The humidity is 80% and the wind is calm. The barometer is 29.83" rising. There was no precipitation during the past 24 hours. The Futurecast is calling for fair weather. ALLEGHANY HIGHLANDS WEATHER National Weather Service- Blacksburg, VA Today Mostly sunny, with a high near 44. Northwest wind 6 to 9 mph. Tonight Mostly clear, with a low around 23. Northwest wind around 6 mph becoming calm after midnight. -2-

Five days of weather forecasts are listed with each daily report and as an eye catcher a scenic photo like the Humpback Bridge, the falls at Falling Springs and the like are added at the foot of each report. The pictures have become an aide to the local tourism effort.

The weather report is also included on the club station Facebook page as the W4COV Weather Station report featuring some local ham pictures. A separate report is written each day for the hamlet of Crows, Virginia. It also has been noted that Dunlap Christian Church is one of only a few in the country publishing its own weather thanks to Amateur Radio.

The weather reports have been going on for several years. People are reading them daily and Amateur Radio call W4SPJ and W4COV are filling a void in this area. It creates 'top of the mind awareness' every day without worrying about being a circular file object for the mass media stations and newspapers.



What need is there in your community that Amateur Radio can fill and get daily reminders of the presence of Ham radio? There are lots to report on our hobby other than pushing a button to talk. And there are a host of different media types to consider sending the right news story to the right media.

Fairfax County ARES at the Presidential Inauguration

By

Brendan O'Neill KM4HRR

Watch "Presidential inauguration 2021: How amateur radio helped to make it safe." on YouTube.

https://youtu.be/u0d_yxfJipw



Sterling Park ARC Meets the Green Bank Observatory and Ms. Luci Finucan



On January 6th, Ms. Finucan gave a one-hour virtual tour of the GBT to the Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club via Zoom. It began with a time-lapse video of the construction between 1990 and 2000, followed by detailed photographs and explanations - from the steel tracks on which the 16-million-pound structure turns, to the Faraday-cage enclosed generators and HVAC on the lowest level, to the safety mechanisms and catwalk, and to the inside of the receiver room. Attendees appreciated the scientific and technical detail (i.e., "This is one giant lightning rod waiting to happen."), as well as the personal stories and funny anecdotes.



Virtual tours are the only way to see the GBT right now, but hopefully inperson tours will resume soon – just remember to turn off your cell phone and amateur radios well before you arrive.

Some of us aspire to hang an 8oM dipole, while others dream of erecting a tower. Then there are the staff and radio astronomer users of the 100-meter Robert C. Byrd Green Bank Telescope, or "GBT".

Nestled in the West Virginia mountains to block out terrestrial signals and noise, it is "the world's largest fully steerable radio telescope" according to Luci Finucan, Professional STEM Educator at the Green Bank Observatory. The observatory features a half dozen other instruments that benefit from the isolation. The NRAO must approve any permanent radio transmitters within the 13,000 square mile National Radio Quiet Zone, and no Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or microwave ovens are permitted within 10 miles. "Less interference means better data", Ms. Finucan explained.

The main dish's off-axis design and actuator-compensated aluminum panels provide high gain and directionality at over 100 GHz. To take full advantage of the wide bandwidth, any of eight cryogenically cooled receivers can be rotated into the focal point on a turret below the 8-meter sub-reflector at the top. Finucan explains the receiver can be selected remotely so "our maintenance people don't have to climb 688 steps every time we want to do a new experiment". Virtual tours are the only way to see the GBT (Virginia Beach ARC already plans to have Ms. Finucan present in May) right now, but hopefully inperson tours will resume soon – just remember to turn off your cell phone and amateur radios well before you arrive.

Charlotte County ARC Gets a Meeting Place

The Charlotte County ARC has received a great gift from the Town of Drakes Branch, VA. They will now meet in Drake Branch's Municipal Center. After hearing this great news from CCAR's Dan Gilliam. I sent a thank you letter to the town.

If your club or group has a great relationship with your jurisdiction and you want to shout it out, please let me know. If it is the result of a special circumstance, I will follow it up with a letter of thanks to the jurisdiction.

Orlando HamCation Announces QSO Party, Special Edition Virtual Presentations

Orlando HamCation has announced it will sponsor the <u>HamCation QSO</u> <u>Party</u> over the February 13 - 14 weekend (UTC), "to create a fun way for

amateurs to celebrate the Orlando HamCation experience over the air." The HamCation QSO Party will be a 12-hour event on HamCation weekend. HamCation 2021 was to host the ARRL National Convention, which now will take place in 2022.

"The QSO party will replicate the camaraderie and social experience of attending HamCation and provide a way to have fun on the radio, since HamCation 2021 will not be held due to COVID-19," the HamCation QSO Party Committee said. The HamCation QSO Party will run from 1500 UTC on February 13 until 0300 UTC on February 14. It will



be a CW and SSB operating event on 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meters. Any station may work any other station.

Categories will be High Power (more than 100 W output), Low Power (100 W output or less, but greater than 5 W), and QRP (5 W output or less). All participants will be single operators; there is no multioperator category. The exchange will be your name and state/province/country, and the outside temperature at your location. "We are including temperature at your QTH as a way of highlighting Orlando's mild February weather," the committee said.

Nine HamCation special event stations with 1 × 1 call signs will be on the air with combined suffixes spelling out HamCation (e.g., K4H, W4A, K4M, etc.). Each contact will count as one point, and stations may be worked once on each band and mode. Entrants will report their scores

on <u>www.3830Scores.com</u>; no logs are required. Final results will be based on the information submitted to the website.

Station guest operators must use their own call signs and submit their scores individually. Plaques and certificates will be awarded.

Virtual HamCation Set

The Orlando HamCation Special Edition online event over the February 13 - 14 weekend will take the place of what would have been the HamCation 2021 inperson show.

The online event will include youth, technology, contesting, and vendor <u>webinar tracks</u>. ARRL will also present two webinars on Saturday, February 13. They are:

- ARRL Member Forum at 1 PM EST, moderated by ARRL Southeastern Division Director Mickey Baker, N4MB.
- Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES[®]) presentation at 3 PM EST, moderated by ARRL Director of Emergency Management Paul Gilbert, KE5ZW. The ARES presentation will include panelists from ARRL Section Emergency Coordinators in Florida.

Live, online prize drawings are also scheduled during the HamCation Special Edition online event.

Silent Key (SK) Old Virginia Hams

In memory of Steve Frick N4OGR Also affectionately known as OGR June

18, 1950 to January 2, 2021



Steve has been a member of the OVH for decades! He has handled everything from the newsletter, programs for club meetings, ARES, Christmas parades, Field Day, outfitting the club trailer, club Vice President, Ham fest committee member, Quarter Master and all-around friend to many.

Our hearts go out to his wife, Jan KE4TMW.RIP

Steve, we will miss you.

FCC Reduces Proposed Amateur Radio Application Fee to \$35

The FCC has agreed with ARRL and other commenters that its proposed \$50 fee for certain amateur radio applications was "too high to account for the minimal staff involvement in these applications." In a *Report and Order* (<u>*R&O*</u>), released on December 29, the FCC scaled back to \$35 the fee for a new license application, a special temporary authority (STA) request, a rule waiver

request, a license renewal application, and a vanity call sign application. All fees are per application. Administrative updates, such as a change of mailing or email address, are exempt.

ARRL had filed comments opposing the FCC's \$50 fee and application fees and <u>urged its members</u> to follow suit.

As the FCC noted in its *R&O*, although some commenters supported the proposed \$50 fee as reasonable and fair, "ARRL and many individual commenters argued that there was no cost-based



justification for application fees in the Amateur Radio Service." The fee proposal was contained in a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* (<u>NPRM</u>) in MD Docket 20-270, which was adopted to implement portions of the "Repack Airwaves Yielding Better Access for Users of Modern Services Act" of 2018 -the so-called "<u>Ray Baum's Act</u>."

"After reviewing the record, including the extensive comments filed by amateur radio licensees and based on our revised analysis of the cost of processing mostly automated processes discussed in our methodology section, we adopt a \$35 application fee, a lower application fee than the Commission proposed in the *NPRM* for personal licenses, in recognition of the fact that the application process is mostly automated," the FCC said in the *R&O*. "We adopt the proposal from the *NPRM* to assess no additional application fee for minor modifications or administrative updates, which also are highly automated."

The FCC turned away the arguments of some commenters that the FCC should exempt amateur radio licensees. The FCC stated that it had no authority to create an exemption "where none presently exists." The FCC also disagreed with those who argued that amateur radio licensees should be exempt from fees because of their public service contribution during emergencies and disasters.

"[W]e are very much aware of these laudable and important services amateur radio licensees provide to the American public," the FCC said, but noted that specific exemptions provided under Section 8 of the so-called "Ray Baum's Act" requiring the FCC to assess the fees do not apply to amateur radio personal licenses. "Emergency communications, for example, are voluntary and are not required by our rules," the FCC noted. "[W]hile the value of the amateur service to the public as a voluntary noncommercial communications service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications, is one of the underlying principles of the amateur service, the amateur service is not an emergency radio service.""

The Act requires that the FCC switch from a Congressionally mandated fee structure to a cost-based system of assessment. The FCC proposed application fees for a broad range of services that use the FCC's Universal Licensing System (ULS), including the Amateur Radio Service, which had been excluded previously. The 2018 statute excludes the Amateur Service from annual *regulatory* fees, but not from *application* fees.

The effective date of the fee schedule has not been established. Read more.

Williamsburg ARC Again: Coffee and Radio Net Reaches 300 Days!

The club's Coffee & Radio Net held its 300th day of continuous operation today with a record breaking 34 check-ins!

The net began on Friday March 20, 2019 as a response to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and was meant to help keep hams both in the club and surrounding communities in touch and sane. I think we've done a pretty good job and one of the big plusses has been that folks who may never have interacted before have become close friends, friendships that will last long after Covid is in the rearview mirror.

The net will continue as it has until the pandemic situation changes, it may morph into another form of some sort but since it has proven to be such a positive influence. I believe it should continue even after things change for the better. Thanks to all the net control stations who lend a hand and we're always looking for folks to give it a try...it's a non-threatening opportunity to develop and refine your skills running a net which of course is every hams' goal to be able to respond in any emergency without having to learn on the fly once one has begun.

So, come join us, we meet every day at 9:00 am on the 146.76 KB4ZIN repeater and everyone is welcome.

73 and thanks again!

Dino KLØS

Chesapeake Amateur Radio Service- Working with the Scouts

Members of the Chesapeake Amateur Radio Service (W4CAR) participated in a Radio Merit Badge event for Troops 5/824, Chesapeake. The Scouts joined a virtual amateur radio training session via Zoom on Thursday January 21st and then met in-person on Saturday January 23, 2021 at the W4CAR Shack to practice their new skills. All scouts got on the air via HF, demonstrated their knowledge of radio concepts and basic circuits, practiced their Amateur Radio Direction Finding skills to track down a fox, and really enjoyed stringing up antennas in the trees using the "big slingshot". Thanks to all the operators who were on frequency to serve as CQ contacts and a huge thanks to K4DGW, KN4USR, KC4MUS, KG4WOJ, & K2MAN for making the in-person event a success!





February 2021 WILLIAMSBURG'S Next Door Neighbors PRICELESS VOL.15, ISSUE 2

Discovering the people who call Williamsburg home



KLØSS TOBY



Great article in the magazine Willamsburg's Next Door Neighbors

featuring Toby Papas KLoSS

https://www.williamsburgneighbors.com/issues/2021/Feb21NDN. pdf





ED GIBBS KW4GF PUBLIC INFORMATION COORDINATOR KW4GF@ARRL.NET

FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER: @ARRLVIRGINIA