

# ARC-SHORTS

May 2018

Club Repeaters: 147.315 (PL 107.2), 444.6 (PL107.2), 224.82 (PL107.2), 53.13 (PL107.2) 927.6 (-25Mhz, PL107.2), and 1282.600 (PL 107.2), DSTAR 145.38Mhz, 442.060, and 1284.600 ALL ARE UP AND RUNNING – HAM IT UP! Get on the air!

SPECIAL NOTE: DMR IS UP AND RUNNING 442.4125 +5Mhz Color Code 1.

## **NEXT CLUB MEETING**

Our meeting is held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month at the Alexandria Police Dispatch Center at 3600-Wheeler Ave. Just off Duke Street just east of Quaker Lane. Meeting starts at 7PM and ends at 9PM. The next meeting is June 8<sup>th</sup> and Rob Anderson will provide a program on early radio pioneers. The next meeting is JUNE 8<sup>th</sup>.

Many of our members have dinner at Atlantis Restaurant in the Bradlee Shopping Center on the south side of Rt 7 just east of 395 most arrive around 5:30. Our program presenters are invited to join us.

## **LAST MEETING**

WINLINK AND AREDN, Rick, N4ASX, who is our ARRL ARES EC, gave an introduction to packet and WINLINK 2000. WINLINK allows the use of Packet radio (either Terminal Node Controllers (TNCs) or software packet programs to send e-mail like traffic over VHF/UHF. In addition to VHF/UHF gateways via the internet, The WINLINK network also provides relay of traffic over HF using several sound card or modem formats. For MARS and MARITIME use PACTOR 4 is popular and a bit expensive. For amateur use, there are sound card protocols (WINMOR and others). Traffic can be sent either like e-mail over radio or it can be sent peer to peer. Unlike packet of old (1980s) you draft an e-mail and tag it as peer to peer and then start a peer to peer session with the station you want to send it to. So, draft your traffic and send it to your outbox, start a peer to peer session in the mode you want to use. Once the program makes the connection via Packet, WINMOR, Pactor etc. The traffic is sent automatically and then the connection is dropped. Other traffic can be addressed to an e-mail address and sent to either a VHF, UHF or HF gateway which will then forward it to the internet or if the internet is down to a station that has a WINLINK. ORG e-mail via radio.

After the program, there were discussions regarding the condition of the repeaters.

The Trustee heard about the issues and yes, it has taken a long time to get these issues addressed. Actions have been taken and will be reported on by the EC and the Trustee at the next meeting.

Related to these issues is the need for NEW members to have access to the repeater to help with maintenance. We need to keep our presence to a minimum due to the nature of our repeater's

location. To this end only the EC, the Trustee and the four members who built the system have access. All of these volunteers have agreed to continue their support, so there is no need for additional people on the list. The location is provided in support of ARES, we could not get these locations without the providing the promise of support to the City, the Hospital and the Red Cross.

As for the performance of the repeaters, the Trustee will provide a report at the next meeting.

73 Rick N4ASX

### **DAYTON (XENIA) HAMVENTION**

Many of our club members attended the Dayton Hamvention this year. Lots of rain, but I don't think I've ever seen so many commercial vendors. Rich, KA4GFY was our ring leader. We left as a loose caravan on Wednesday and most of us arrived around 4:30 PM. The next stop was the local steak place for dinner and on Thursday bright and early we headed for the Museum of the Air Force to see the roll out of the "Memphis Belle" the B-17F that was the first to complete 25 missions and then returned to the U.S. to be part of a bond drive. As one who use to see the Memphis Belle almost daily when I lived in Memphis (72-76). The plane was badly treated and much of anything that could be taken was taken from the plane. The Air Force took 12 plus years to restore the plane and did a fantastic job. Worth the trip.

Friday and Saturday were Hamvention days. A great deal of the flea market was in the grass so some of us did not see most of the flea market. Still it is and has been one of the greatest hamfests of the year with about 30,000 people attending.

Rich made the largest purchase, you'll have to ask him at the meeting.  
Mark, Erik, Jay, Rich, Ted, Ian and a few I may have missed attended and all had a good time.

Some of us visited the VOA museum, well worth the donation.

### **KENWOOD TH-D74A Review (First Impressions)**

Every once in a while, a new radio captures the community. Kenwood jumped into the ICOM domain with a radio that does D-Star. For many years if you wanted a D-Star radio you purchased an ICOM. Kenwood was the main supporter of APRS and Packet radios. Kenwood's TH-F6A has been out for over 10 years and was a great radio that provided THREE bands. 2 meters, 1.25 meters and 70 cm. and you could get after market batteries that provided 3 AHrs of capacity. For the ARPS crowd Kenwood marketed the TH-D7, and TH-D72A, handhelds with built in 1200/9600 baud TNCs and GPS receivers and they were excellent FM voice radios as well. So, Kenwood takes the tri-band feature from the F6, the APRS functions of the 72 and adds D-Star and comes up with the TH-D74A. Not a cheap radio but does all of these functions well.

I've only had the radio for a few weeks, so this is a FIRST LOOK. It's easy to program the VFO and putting the VFO into memory is not too bad. Audio is clear with good reports on the other

end. Dual watch (ability to receive two channels at once) is nice and if your using APRS you can have your second channel on you voice frequency.

The APRS display is very nice and as complete as the mobile TM-D710A. The D-Star has good sounding audio both on receive and good reports back from other D-Star stations on audio quality. Batteries come as 1.1 Amp-hour and 1.7 Amp-hour. My radio was provided with a 1.7 Amp-hour pack. I purchased the drop-in charger and a spare battery with the radio. The radio itself was “on-sale” for \$509.95 but after ‘other items” I dropped a few hundred more. Hard to leave the candy store without spending money.

My first impression was that the radio did everything as advertised and did it well. I use the RT Systems software and I love their products. Programming the radio with the RT Systems is a breeze. I copied my data from the F6 program updated a few repeaters and then added the D-Star from the ICOM ID-51A. Another point is that RT Systems has a D-Star calculator that makes using D-Star reflectors much easier, but that for another article.

One caveat is that running the GPS and APRS (assume your beaconing) will drain the battery. When you're not using APRS or DPRS you can turn off the GPS and the TNC. Another nice change is the battery clip is secured to the RADIO and not to the battery pack. I still found that I would rather have the radio in a pouch then hanging on a belt, but.... The data interface on the radio is a regular USB port, so you can program it and link it for digital communications without a special cable. HOWEVER, you will need to go to the Kenwood website to get the drivers for the radio to use the interface. If you have the Mirage BD-34 amp you can use it on 2 and 440 but NOT on 220Mhz.

There are not many 220 repeaters in our area, but our own 224.82 (107.2 PL) still works but the audio is way down. Its coverage is better than some of our other repeaters due to 220MHz propagation. Up until recently, NVFMA had a repeater up on 224.1 that was linked to the machine in Bradenton Florida and its coverage was good all the way to Quantico and covered most of northern Va. The 74 is capable of 220 D-Star, but so far, no repeaters are up for that in our area. I understand that the NVFMA machine was moved and is in a temporary location with a much lower antenna height.

To make a long article short --- I do really like the radio and its no more expensive then the ICOM dual band handheld. If your NOT into APRS/Packet/D-Star then I would look for a TH-F6A. If your not interested in 220 Mhz then there are a great deal of great dual band HTs, BUT if you want one package that lets you play on three bands, and provide good D-Star and APRS/Packet functions then the TH-D74A is hard to beat.

73 Rick N4ASX

### **President's Corner**

Field Day is almost here! FD has always been the highlight of the year for me in ham radio. I remember getting on HF for the first time when I was 12 at a Field Day in New York. Sleeping in a leaky tent and getting a thousand mosquito bites was well worth the memories. Every year I

get to learn something new, I can't wait to see what I learn this year and I hope to see you all there.

73

Monica, KC2IAY

### **REPEATER ETIQUITE**

We've had a lot of folks saying the 2-meter repeater is not working as it should because they have a hard time getting into the net on Thursday evening. The last two nets were full of many people keying up at the same time. FM works on capture by the receiver of the STRONGEST signal. It's also good to remember that as you jump in to check in the net control station is trying to write down your call sign, your name and any other items. Listen first! The net is not a DX contact and the net control station will keep asking for check ins until there is no one left to check in, but if three check in at once only ONE signal gets in or if they are equal strength then it's garbage. Remember that we encourage new net control stations and it is a learning experience. Be patient, take a turn on check-in and you will get two chances to speak.

73 Rick

N4ASX (ARES EC)

### **Field Day**

June 23/24 10AM Saturday to 3PM Sunday at the ball fields on Eisenhower Ave across from the regional park.

This is an annual 24-hour event where we operate HF (VHF/UHF/Satellite/ and anything else) in emergency conditions. Antennas must be temporary and assemble on site. Power is from generators or alternate sources (computers and lights may be run on commercial power), with the idea that we can communicate "in the field" for 24 hours and to prove our effectiveness Field Day looks like a contest. But what better way to show that you can communicate anywhere in a disaster than to spend a weekend exercising in emergency conditions.

Erik is our Field Day chairman this year. We have the club's trailer and generators and generators from some of our members. Antennas are up to the 5 band captains

### **Future Programs**

June 8, 2018— Dayton Hamvention, Bob Anderson program, Field Day Prep **meeting**, Post HAMVENTION reports. Repeater Issues.

July 13, 2018 – Post Field Day. Mark on Linex.

August 10, 2018 – Mark on Linex....

September 14, 2018 -- City Emergency Service and ARES

October 12, 2018 – Planning for 2019, Nominations, budget etc.  
November 9, 2018 -- Elections  
December 14, 2018 – Annual Holiday Party. (Fiona's ??)

Let me know what you want to hear about. HELP!!!! If you have an idea for a program, please let Rick know and he will try to find someone to provide the program. If you know someone you would like to have present a program, let me know Rick, N4ASX

### **Hamfests –**

Just in time for those last-minute Field Day needs, is the Father's Day Hamfest in Upperco, MD on June 17, 2018. It's sponsored by the Baltimore Amateur Radio Club. The location is the Arcadia Volunteer Fire Company Carnival Grounds in Upperco. Talk-in will be on the Baltimore ARC's 146.670 MHz repeater (PL 107.2 Hz). Here is the link:  
<http://www.w3ft.com/BARC%202018%20Hamfest.pdf>

The next hamfest in our area is the Berryville hamfest, sponsored by the Shenandoah Valley Amateur Radio Club. It's a very nice hamfest under the trees at the Clarke County Ruritan Fairgrounds, just off Route 7. Talk-in is usually on the 146.820 MHz repeater (PL 146.2 Hz). Here is the link: <http://svarc.us/hamfest/>

### **Training –**

Our recent class finished on May 8. Here are the new hams:

Benjamin Edelberg	KN4MHZ
Zachary Leushner	KN4MIA
Zane Phipps	KN4MIB
William Ho-Gonzalez	KN4MIC
George Spack	KN4MID
Davina Fournier	KN4MIE
Drew Coble	KN4MIF
Edward Weigman	KC3LLW
Bianca Prince	KC3LLX
Carlos Williams	KC3LLY

Be sure to welcome them to our hobby when you hear them on the air. Many thanks to the teachers and Volunteer Examiners for a job well done.

Plans are underway for the next class starting in early October, 2018.

### **Contests –**

- June 9 thru 11 – ARRL June VHF Contest. 50 MHz and up. Exchange is 4 character grid square. Most of us are in FM18

- June 16 and 17 – West Virginia QSO Party. Exchange is RST and state.
- July 14 and 15 – IARU HF World Championship. Exchange is RST and zone. We are in zone 8.

Don't forget, be sure to send in your log within 5 days after the contest ends for all ARRL sponsored contests.

June 17 is not only Father's Day and the Baltimore hamfest, it's also Kids Day on amateur radio. This is the perfect opportunity to introduce kids to the world of amateur radio. If you hear them on the air, be sure to work them and send them a QSL card. You never know, we might be talking with them again at some point with their own call.

REMEMBER to support the CLUB'S score for contests by providing Ian N8IK your info (Name, Call sign and Grid Square location) and submit your scores for the contests you play in. Contesting is one way we show that we are using our frequency allocations.

In case you missed it, there was an article on the ARRL website about an editorial from the chair of the IARU Region 1 VHF/UHF/microwave committee, about the threats to the amateur radio spectrum above 30 MHz. Commercial interests will gladly take any spectrum we aren't using and turn it into a profit center.

While we all look at cell phone companies as being the big threat, many of us remember the threat from a certain well-know software manufacturer who had an idea for low earth orbiting satellites on our 2 meter band. They claimed hams and the LEOs could co-exist without any problems. Fortunately, ARRL and other organizations proved them wrong and the company finally backed down.

By showing we use our spectrum, other services will have a hard time proving that we don't use our spectrum and it's up for re-allocation to someone else.

Though not a contest, don't forget ARRL Field Day. It's our chance to show the public what we can do after a disaster. Field Day is on June 23 and 24. We will be setting up at Joseph Hensley Park, just off Eisenhower Avenue in Alexandria, across from the animal shelter and the water park. The ARRL webpage has details and a link for information and look here in ARC Shorts and on the club webpage for the Alexandria Radio Club's Field Day information.

### **Repeaters –**

In addition to the regular Thursday night net on the 147.315 repeater, there was a proposal in the February ARC Shorts to do a follow – on net on other ARC repeaters. The rotation would include other analog repeaters as well as the digital repeaters. This will not only provide a little activity on the other repeaters but will also help everybody with the year-long Worked All ARC Members contest. Each new band and mode counts as another contact.

The club repeaters are all up and running. As always, ham it up and get on the air.

73, Rich, KA4GFY

### **Social Events**

Monday Night Burgers – There is a group that gets together at 6:15 PM on Mondays at a local burger joint. Mark up on the 147.315 repeater and join them for the fun. Mark up on the repeater about 6PM and join the group. The location does change! IF you have a good spot, you might suggest it to the group.