

February 13, 2020

ARRL VIRGINIA SECTION

PUBLIC INFORMATION NEWS

**2020 ARRL Virginia Section Convention
at WINTERFEST**

THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA HAM RADIO AND AUXCOMM CONFERENCE

SUNDAY MARCH 29, 2020

OUTDOOR 6AM-1 PM, INDOOR 8 AM- 1PM

Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus

8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale, Virginia

See attachments to the Email



Vienna Wireless Society Hosts QLF CW Contest

By

Harry Mamaux III K3NF

Pete Hadley, K6BFA, of the Vienna Wireless Society www.viennawireless.net, will conduct a rarely seen CW or Morse code contest, a “QLF Contest”. QLF is a “Q” signal (amateur radio shorthand) for “Are you sending with your left foot?”. This humorous and time-honored Q signal is rarely used, but jokingly refers to someone sending poor code or with a bad “fist” for CW. The contest features a giant size CW key, positioned on the floor, connected to an oscillator, that contestants key with their left foot. Bare feet or socks are optional. A team of judges will receive and critique the message. Contestants will be graded on the most accurate and fastest entry. A one second penalty will be added for each incorrect or unreadable character. Errors and time will make the final score. If you think you have a pretty good “fist” come to the 2020 Virginia Section Convention and Winterfest, Sunday, March 29th, at Northern Virginia Community College (off Wakefield Chapel Road) in Annandale, VA and see how your “left foot” stacks up with other CW operators. (Code proficiency is not an asset). The fun contest will be part of a day filled with activities and prizes at the 44th Annual Winterfest, 2020 VA Section Convention, and AUXCOMM Conference that is expected to draw over 1,000 attendees from the tri-state area.



Next Issue: AUXCOMM Schedule and Guests

Virginia ARES groups participate in Operation Grid Failure

From our Section Manager's Joe Palsa's February, 2020 newsletter: "Operation Grid Failure exercise held on Jan 18, 2020 was as we understand, declared a success. Reading many of the after-action reports, showed great cooperation of a significant number of local agencies, ARES groups and AUXCOMM groups (20+). Over 100+ operators from these agencies and groups as well another 25+ individual operators took part. Quite a lot of digital traffic generated and passed along with WINLINK and other modes. Kudos to W4GHS and his AUXCOMM groups for another great exercise."

Greene County Virginia Amateur Radio Club (GCVARC) Participates in Operation Grid Failure in Virginia on January 18, 2020 (Note: More VA ARES Club reports in future issues.)

The Greene County Virginia Amateur Radio club (GCVARC) participated in the State of Virginia Grid Failure Exercise on January 18, 2020. Working cooperatively with local Greene County officials, the GCVARC members planned and executed their part of the exercise using an Incident Command System (ICS) Action Plan format. Using a dispatching point at the Greene County PSAP (Public Safety Answering Point) the club broadcast exercise messages to a mobile unit directly and through "relay" stations staffed by club members.

The Operation Grid Failure exercise was held throughout the State of Virginia for amateur radio personnel and local emergency management agencies wishing to participate. The Greene County Virginia Amateur Radio Club (GCVARC) participated, staffing the amateur radio room at the PSAP, at home-based relay stations and in a public safety mobile unit. A unit also broadcast from the area of the County EOC (Emergency Operations Center).

The Greene County portion of the exercise was conducted from 0900-1200 hours with a "hot wash" review taking place at the local library for one hour following the exercise. Using 2-meter voice communications, the main objectives were to evaluate generating messages from the PSAP, transmitting those messages through the amateur radio room to mobile and fixed locations throughout the county. Club members established "Net Control" and managed communications throughout the County of Greene.



The GCVARC reviewed an After-Action Report at their February 6, 2020 meeting. The club identified ten (10) items they will do differently to improve performance in the future along with several follow-up items. The After-Action Review contents will be used in designing future exercises. Club members were able to review items attached to the After-Action Report which included: the ICS action plan, draft PSAP message traffic, hot wash notes, and the ICS Communication Logs (214 and 309).

**Submitted by William “Bill” Sterling, K4FZE, GCVARC President
Summary prepared by Steve Bowman**

The Virginia Net (VN) is going to move the net frequency.

Due to the strong and persistent interference from stations operating using the FT-8 digital mode, the VN is going to move the net frequency on Monday, February 24th from 3568.5 KHz to 3568.0 KHz. That gives us two weeks to get the word out.

There may still be some interference down only 500 Hz, but a narrow CW filter, less RF gain, and a little IF-Shift should be enough to keep the interference down to a tolerable level.

Between now and the 24th, please listen on 3568.0 KHz for other CW nets. Let me know if you hear anything so we can modify the plan, if necessary.

Please pass this on to any station that may need to know.

Net Controls, use this QNC text each net, as needed:

“THE VN WILL MOVE DOWN TO 3568R0 ON MONDAY FEBRUARY 24”

73,

Steve Krumm KV4AN

Net Manager, VN



Thanks to the Western Tidewater Radio Association for extending a kind invitation to present at their February 10, 2020, general meeting. I enjoyed meeting the leadership and members! Thanks to SM Joe Palsa K3WRY and SEC John Roberts WB4AXY for the privilege of allowing me to present at FROSTFEST. As time, work, and travel allow, I will try to visit more clubs in the future.

What's With 2 Meters?

What is happening with 2 meters? Maybe I'm the only one sensing this. Twenty-seven years ago, when I was still a new ham, our repeater was filled with chatter almost all day long. I remember John Smith W4HDW (SK) holding "court" most of the day. If one wanted to meet someone on the 146.97 W4KXV repeater (named for one of the greatest ham radio guys, Wally Burkett W4KXV(SK)), a ham would break in, John would say, "Go ahead!", the ham would call another to meet on simplex, and then off the repeater and on to simplex. The South Hampton Roads Amateur Emergency Services Net met every night at 9:00 PM during the week, and then another round of hams would set up a "roundtable" QSO until 11:00 PM or after. The repeater was used all day long and one could check 2 meters to find endless QSOs on simplex. Are two-meter QSOs and chatter a thing of the past? No more rag chewing? I hope I am wrong.

Jack Smith, KE4LWT, a member of the VA ARES Strategic Plan Committee, and I have periodic eyeball QSOs via Messenger. A few times we would emphasize that hams must use their frequencies if they hope to keep them. We know that companies salivate when they see bandwidth, and we have some of that bandwidth that companies and services may want.

VHF and UHF rag chews are a perfect way to show use of our frequencies. How is a rag chew different on 2 m, 220, 440, or anywhere else different on VHF and UHF than from HF? Before we must fight for what we have, let's get back to getting together on our repeaters and simplex frequencies and have good rag chews or roundtables. These frequencies don't have to be limited to nets or EMCOMM exercises.

Use it or lost it!

I'll be posting this on my blog at www.arrlvapic.blogspot.com, so you can chime in with your comments if you so wish.



Send me club news, pictures, and commentaries for future publications. Send op-eds also. Please send club member achievements also!

Valentine's Day Message:

Happy YLs/XYLs
Happy Shacks that excel!

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From the ARRL:

ARRL HF Band Planning Committee Seeks Comments on Recommendations

02/05/2020

The ARRL HF Band Planning Committee is **seeking comments and suggestions** from the Amateur Radio community on its **report** to the ARRL Board. At the Board's January meeting, the committee presented its **specific recommendations** in graphical form for each HF band and each US license class, with the goal of increasing harmony on the HF bands, particularly between CW and digital users.



“In general, the committee is of the opinion that there is justification for additional space to become available for digital modes, as well as for the operation of digital stations under automatic control,” the committee told the Board. “The very changes in spectrum usage that have required our committee’s resurgence indicate that digital modes of communication are already increasing in popularity, and the trend is expected to continue or even accelerate. To this end, we have tried to ensure that digital allocations are sufficient for at least a modicum of growth.”

The committee also anticipates an increase in automatically controlled digital stations (ACDS). The report further points to “significant use” of modern data modes in emergency communication and said its recommendations provide significant support for the evolution and continued relevance of amateur radio. “Our failure to adapt to these needs could consign amateur radio to the technological scrap heap,” the report said.

The committee was revived last summer to consider conflicts between FT and JT modes and other modes. The panel’s approach has been to designate distinct assignments for CW, narrowband (NB) data <500 Hz, wideband (WB) data <2800 Hz, and ACDS. For its work, the committee presumed approval of three ARRL petitions to the FCC: RM-11708 (WT Docket WT 16-239 — “symbol rate” proceeding), RM-11759 (80/75 meter allocations), and RM-11828 (enhanced Technician privileges). The committee also assumed that users can agree to sharing arrangements within a given

allocation — narrowband vs wideband sharing within the ACDS allocation, for example. It also took into consideration how mode usage is regulated or planned elsewhere in the world.

In terms of mode classes, the committee agreed on CW, NB data, WB data, NB with ACDS, and WB with ACDS. The committee said it considered these mode classes incompatible and that they should not have overlapping allocations, with the exception of CW, which is authorized within any amateur radio allocation. The committee’s approach would maintain the existing low-end 25-kHz CW-only sub-bands for exclusive use by Amateur Extra class licensees.

The panel encouraged CW identification and a listen-before-transmitting protocol for ACDS, if feasible. It also decided that a single allocation for ACDS without regard to bandwidth would be the best approach. “We note that this will put responsibility on the digital community to hold an effective dialog on the issue and to then self-regulate the users of this segment to adhere to the eventual agreement.” A need for flexibility in allocations is desirable, the committee said, and considered whether allocations might be time-of-day or time-of-week dependent, for example.

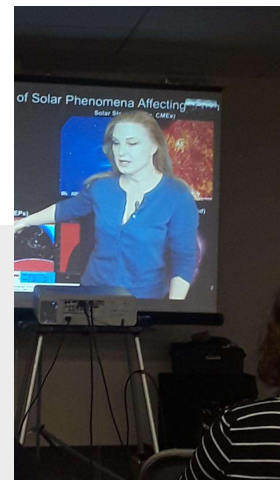
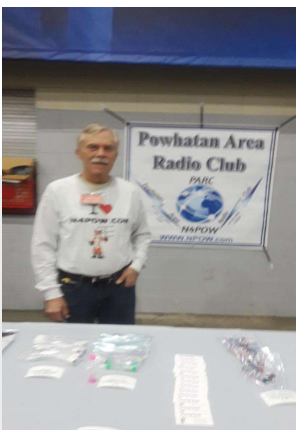
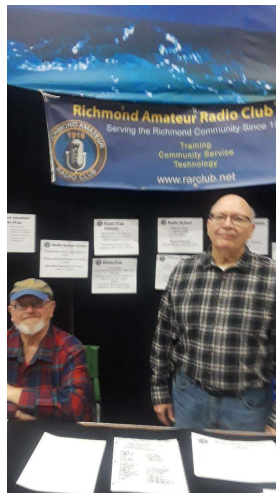


“Modern amateurs must expect to adapt to this kind of fluid assignment of spectrum to incompatible uses, using time-based sharing, rather than only a single assignment,” the committee said, expressing the hope that as band plan/sharing agreements are reached that they consider the advantage of “non-simultaneous sharing possibilities.

Reiterating the position ARRL has taken in recent FCC filings, the committee said it sees encryption and open-source as enforcement matters as being outside the scope of the Band Planning Committee.

The Committee would like **comments** by **February 19**.

Faces of the Richmond FROSTFEST February 1,2020





Thanks to the Richmond Amateur Telegraphic Society, Inc (RATS) for a great FROSTFEST!