



ARC-SHORTS

The Newsletter of the Alexandria Radio Club
August 2026

- ▶ **President's Corner**
- ▶ **Member News**
- ▶ **Activities and Events**
- ▶ **ARES & EmComm**
- Notes**
- ▶ **Next Meeting**
- ▶ **Last Meeting**
- ▶ **Club Leadership**



Alexandria's Police Chief Terrick McGuire (2d from right.) visited the ARC table at National Night Out, August. 4. More pictures and story below.

President's Corner

Aaron Kahn (K6HLC)

I would first like to share with the club that Skip, Sean, and I had a productive meeting at the Alexandria Citizens Corps Council meeting. The Club was complemented on our performance in various volunteer events. Thanks to Sean for heading this up and building bridges to the wider Alexandria community. As of this writing, I am looking forward to participating in the National Night Out in Del Ray. This should be a great way to show off to the community the hobby of amateur radio.

Finally, the board and I are working to develop a radio loaner program for the members. We have taken stock of the equipment in the club inventory and

noticed that the Club has several radios which are not currently in use. Most of these radios are HF hardware and would be great for those who have just passed the General class license and would like to get on the air but without having to expend funds right away for a radio. I will have more to say on this topic as the board finalizes the plan.

Till next time, Aaron (K6HLC)

Member News

Welcome New Member

Alan Gehl — KA3ZQY

Activities and Events

ARC Connects with the Community at National Night Out

The Del Ray neighborhood was buzzing with community spirit on Tuesday evening, August 4th, as residents gathered for the annual National Night Out, an event designed to strengthen police-community partnerships and foster neighborhood camaraderie. Among the vibrant mix of local organizations, first responders, and civic groups, the Alexandria Radio Club (ARC) made a strong showing with an interactive display table dedicated to the world of amateur radio.

Representing the club at this year's event were ARC President Aaron (K6HLC), Sean (K4KBK), Sandy (KQ4DNE), and Stex (K4IEW). Throughout the evening, the team engaged with a steady stream of curious visitors, ranging from local families with eager children to longtime radio enthusiasts looking to delve deeper into the hobby.

Kids and parents alike had the chance to learn how amateur radio works, see live equipment in action, and discover the critical role amateur operators play in community resilience and disaster relief.

A highlight of the night was the arrival of several key city figures. ARC members welcomed visits from Alexandria Chief of Police Terrick McGuire, Fire/EMS Chief Filipe Hernandez, Jr., and Marc Barbieri, the Emergency Management Coordinator for the City of Alexandria and a longtime friend of the club. Their presence underscored the vital partnership between local emergency services and trained volunteer radio operators when official communication networks are challenged.



Photo left: ARC members Sandy-KQ4DNE, Sean-K4KBK, Stex-K4IEW, and Aaron-K6HLC, ring Fire/EMS Chief Filipe Hernandez (center) at the club's table at Alexandria's National Night Out, August 4. Photo right: Marc Barbieri, City Emergency Management Coordinator (2d from right), also visited.



Events like National Night Out highlight the Alexandria Radio Club's ongoing commitment to public service, STEM education, and community engagement. By bringing radio technology out into the neighborhood, the club continues to inspire the next generation of operators while reinforcing a safer, more connected Alexandria.

73, Stex

Club Merchandise Now Available
<https://alexandriarc.goldmedalideas.com/>
Order caps and shirts
with the ARC logo and your call sign.

ARES & EmComm Notes

Stefano “Stex” Fonda (K4IEW) has been named the Emergency Coordinator for Alexandria.

ARC EmComm Division Highlights SKYWARN® at July Meeting

At our monthly club meeting on Friday, July 10, I delivered a presentation on behalf of the Alexandria Radio Club’s Emergency Communications Division. The presentation, “SKYWARN® and Amateur Radio: Saving Lives Through Real-Time Weather Spotting,” was an example of how the Emergency Communications Division focuses on training and support for the club's EmComm activities.



For those who missed it, the session highlighted how amateur radio operators can turn their hobby into a direct public safety service by acting as the crucial eyes and ears of the National Weather Service (NWS). SKYWARN® is a volunteer program established by the NWS that boasts nearly 300,000 trained weather spotters across the United States.

The core of the presentation focused on a critical technical limitation known as the “Radar Blind Spot.” Because current weather radars shoot straight, linear radio frequency beams into space, the curvature of the Earth creates a gap at longer distances. A radar scanning a storm 50 miles away might completely overshoot the lowest 2,000 to 5,000 feet of the atmosphere. This means automated systems frequently miss developing tornadoes, localized flash flooding, or destructive microburst winds occurring right at ground level. This gap is exactly where ham radio operators come in. Satellites and computers can only estimate surface conditions, but they cannot replace a human being observing weather out a window and reporting it in real time. The presentation detailed exactly what local hams should look out for and report within our

region, including tornadoes and funnel clouds, damaging winds, flash flooding, and local effects of winter storms.

The presentation emphasized three reasons why every ARC member should consider getting involved:

1. Ultimate Purpose for EmComm: It bridges our hobby directly with life-saving community action. When the NWS activates a SKYWARN® net, ham radio provides the only direct, real-time voice link into the weather forecast office.
2. Situational Awareness: Knowing how to accurately read a storm keeps you and your family safe, allowing you to filter out media hype with actionable, real-world data.
3. Professionalism: Public safety agencies hold certified SKYWARN® spotters in high regard for their radio discipline and procedure-oriented attitude—knowing exactly what to report, how to communicate clearly, and when to keep the frequency clear.

Becoming an official spotter is completely free. The NWS Baltimore/Washington office offers regular two-hour online and in-person Basic and Advanced classes. Upon completion, you are added to the regional database and issued an official NWS Spotter ID.

To check the training schedule and register for an upcoming class, visit weather.gov/lwx/skywarn. Let's get trained, get ready, and keep Alexandria safe!

Stefano “Stex” Fonda – K4IEW

ARC EmComm Division

ARC Club Repeaters

6m: 53.130– (PL 107.2)
2m: 147.315+ (PL 107.2)
1.25m: 224.820– (PL 107.2)
70cm: 444.600+ (PL 107.2)
33cm: 927.600– (PL 107.2)
23cm: 1282.600– (PL 107.2)
D-STAR 2m: 145.380–
D-STAR 70cm: 442.060+
D-STAR 23cm: 1284.600–
DMR 70 cm: 442.4125 +5Mhz Color Code 1
GMRS: 467.625+ (PL 123.0)

Hamfests:

- **Saturday, August 22 - Sunday, August 23, Huntsville Hamfest, ARRL Convention.** Huntsville, AL. <https://hamfest.org/>
(Selected from ARRL Hamfest Calendar <https://www.arrl.org/hamfests-and-conventions-calendar>)

Contests/QSO Parties:

- **August 22-23. Ohio QSO Party.** <https://ohqp.org>
- **August 22-24. Hawaii QSO Party.** <https://www.hawaiiqsoparty.org/>
- **August 29-30. US Islands QSO Party.** <https://usislands.org/>
- **August 29-30. Kansas QSO Party.** <https://ksqsoparty.org/>
(Selected from ARRL Contests Calendar <http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar>)

Special Events:

- **August 15, 1000Z-2050Z, W2GSB, Fire Island Lighthouse, NA026.**
Sponsored by Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club, Babylon, NY.
<https://gsbarc.org/>
- **August 15-16. International Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend.**
<https://illw.net/>
(Selected from ARRL Special Events Calendar <https://www.arrl.org/special-event-stations>)

Next Meeting

Friday, August 14, 1900 hours, Alexandria Police Department HQ, 3600 Wheeler Ave., Alexandria, VA, 22304.

Last Meeting Minutes

Date: July 10, 2026

Time: 1900 hours

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

1. Call to Order & Opening

- Meeting called to order at 1900 hours.
- Club member introductions were conducted.
- New members / visitors: Liz and Tyler, attending their first in-person meeting (second meeting overall).

2. Awards & Certificates

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

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- No corrections to the minutes from the last meeting were noted.
- Motion made to approve the minutes; motion seconded.
- Result: Minutes approved.

4. Recent Events

Field Day 2026

- Great time for all; thank you to everyone who came out and participated, from Technicians to Extras.
- Power was not fully up 13 minutes before Field Day began, but the team came together and started on time.
- New member Damaris joined the club at Field Day and jumped right in making contacts.
- Aaron, K6HLC, made a contact with a former W4HFH member in Ohio who specifically asked for Don, KI4D.
- Bob, KO4ZIK, made a contact with someone from Arizona who also said hello to a few members.

July 4th Emergency Operations Backup Support

- Thank you to Stex for leading this effort, which did a great job showcasing the club's capabilities to the greater region.

5. Upcoming Events

- Citizens Corps Council Meeting – July 27th, 7:00–9:00 PM at Station 4. Made up of the Red Cross, Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Volunteer Alexandria, and W4HFH. One goal is to help these groups move from FRS to GMRS, or even obtain Ham licenses. New leadership (Aaron, K6HLC, and Skip, WD1W) needs to be introduced.
- National Night Out – August 4th at Del Ray (Pat Miller Square). Arrive early for ice cream.

6. Officer Reports

VP Report – Skip, WD1W

- Gave a recap of Field Day (see Recent Events above).

Secretary Report – Mike, KQ4WOI

- No corrections to the previous meeting minutes noted; minutes approved.
- Will be reaching out to members regarding their VA QSO Party certificates.

Treasurer Report – Richard, KW4UJ

- Profit & Loss for June: Net income reported.
- Basic checking balance: \$2,894.00; outstanding checks: \$2,473.85; actual operable balance: \$420.97.
- Total in the bank: \$14,502.17.
- June and July are historically the club's most expensive months.

7. Committee Reports

Membership – Sandy, KQ4DNE

- 1 new member joined on Field Day – welcome, Damaris.

Public Information Officer – Jan, KB2LRX

- A few members of the public stopped by; one family visited twice (mom in the morning, then returned with her son and husband in the afternoon).
- New member Damaris took the Metro from DC to King Street, then rode her scooter to the park.

ARES

- Joe K has resigned as ARES; Stex has been approved and is taking over as ARES.

Repeater Status – Ian, N8IK

- No updates reported.

Emergency Communications – Stex, K4IEW

- July 4th activation request from DHSEMA, led by Liz Goodson and DC MARP; ARC provided 6 operators for 10 hours of coverage, along with a few members of AARC.
- Other recent activations include the State of the Union, the Inauguration, and July 4th.
- Skip suggested it would be good to get into the EOC to become more familiar with, and verify, the equipment.
- Sandy noted there has been significant turnover in ARES leadership, which could be an opportunity to talk with the city about whether to continue the current ARES model or treat it more as a club activity, similar to the approach taken by the state EOC.
- Extensive discussion followed regarding qualifications and the different checks required by various agencies and groups.

Training and Testing – Richard, KW4UJ

- Working on scheduling the next class based on instructor availability. Instructors need to be secured first, after which the club will decide between a Technician class and a general class.

Trailer – Sean, K4KBK

- Trailer is in good working order; however, the club discovered at Field Day that trees had been moved, so a new antenna configuration will need to be developed for 80/160.

Webmaster – Richard, KW4UJ

- Website is still going strong.

Socials – Jason, WA6MPR

- Mike, KQ4WOI, is asking club members to upload photos of their radio activities to Discord; he will gather them and post to Instagram.

Net Control – Bryan, WD4ADF

- Not present; still looking for more net controllers.

8. Old Business

- Club Merch is available at alexandriaarc.goldmedalideas.com.
- Still moving forward with 501(c)(3) status; paperwork is with the attorneys.

9. New Business

- None.

10. General Comments

- Don commented that he would like more frequent updates on the status of the 501(c)(3) process for greater visibility. Aaron agreed; drafts have been written and are with the accountant/attorney for wording verification before being sent to the club. Information will be shared with the club as soon as it is received.
- Bob would like to hold a lessons-learned session from Field Day; look for a Zoom invite to follow. Who will lead Field Day next year? Let's keep the momentum going.
- Calendar: Berryville Hamfest, Sunday, August 2nd.
- Bob achieved a full sweep of the 13 Colonies award; Aaron missed a few.

Ask an Elmer

- Liz and Tyler are still using handhelds. They had planned to attend Field Day but went to the World Cup instead; they plan to drop in on a POTA event.

11. Action Items

Responsible Party	Action Item
Mike, KQ4WOI	Reach out to members for their VA QSO Party certificates.
Field Day Planning	Develop a new antenna configuration for 80/160 following the tree relocation at the Field Day site.
Richard, KW4UJ	Secure instructors and schedule the next Technician or General class if possible
Skip, WD1W / Aaron, K6HLC	Introduce new leadership at the Citizens Corps Council Meeting (July 27th).
Aaron, K6HLC, W4HFH Board	Finalize and distribute the 501(c)(3) status updates more frequently to the club

Responsible Party	Action Item
All Members	Upload radio activity photos to Discord for Jason/Mike to share on Instagram.

12. Adjournment

- Motion to close the formal meeting at 8:27 PM. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes recorded by: Mike Joyce, KQ4WOI

Email questions to secretary@w4hfh.org

Detailed Meeting Attendance

Recorded Attendance, July 10th, 2026 (16 in person, 3 remotely)

Mike, KQ4WOI	Sandy, KQ4DNE	Ted, W9TCE	Mait, AA4HS	Gary, KC7TNU
Skip, WD1W	Richard, KW4UJ	Terry, K3TLA		Erik, KI4BXU
Jan, KB2LRX	Tom, NH7XJ	Stex, K4IEW		Ed, KQ4YGT
Sean, K4KBK	Bob, KO4ZIK	Tyler, KR4MAD		
Aaron, K6HLC	Don, KI4D	Liz, KR4MAL		

Club Leadership

Elected Officers for 2026 *

Aaron Kahn, K6HLC—President

William A. “Skip” Dronen, Jr., WD1W
—Vice President

Mike Joyce, KQ4WOI—Secretary

Richard Morani, KW4UJ—Treasurer

Committee Chairmen

Public Information Officer (PIO)—Jan
Maas, KB2LRX

Elected Board of Directors, At Large*

Sandy Kenyon, KQ4DNE

Joseph A. Porcelli, KT3I

Sean Gallagher, K4KBK

* Voting members of the leadership group
are the elected officers and elected
directors.

ARES & EmComm Division—Stefano
“Stex” Fonda, W4IEW

Club Leadership Group members may be contacted using the following email addresses:

<<mailto:president@w4hfh.org>> president@w4hfh.org

<<mailto:vice-president@w4hfh.org>> vice-president@w4hfh.org

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<<mailto:secretary@w4hfh.org>> secretary@w4hfh.org

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