The Ham Arundel News

Providing Fellowship and Community Service through Amateur Radio Since 1951

November 2014 ***37th Year of Publication***

The Prez Sez...

November is upon us with cooler weather and fall colors.

We have a number of activities coming up this month. The Rosaryville 50 kilometer run public service event needs our help. It's a good race in a beautiful place, with good people and a chance to support the club and build those public service hours. If you can help click on the public service link on the website and signup.

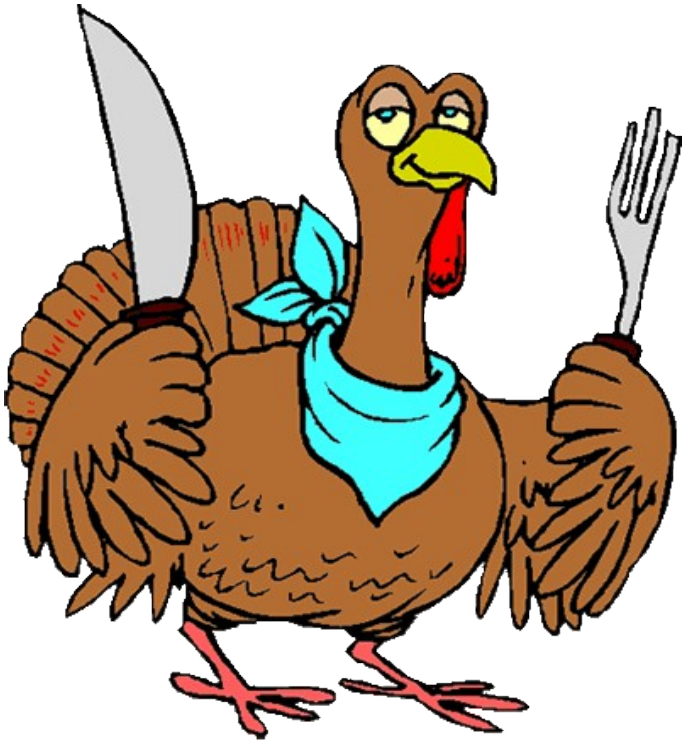
On November 6th. The program will be about Fox Hunting, and the best procedures for participating and winning.

On November 20th. Will be an antenna building project. The antenna will be a 20meter, 40 meter made with out of ladder line. This is your chance to improve those soldering skills etc. and have a very practical antenna to use. Cost for materials will be $20.00 contact Giff Hammar, K1GAH, (ghammar@sv-phonex.com) to reserve a spot.

During October AARC lost a valuable member, Gregory Leonovich Sr. N2IQT, became a Silent Key, on October 12, 2014. Greg obtained his Technician License, many years ago when he worked as an over the road trucker hauling goods throughout New England. After retirement he moved to the Annapolis, and joined AARC. He obtained his General License and became an active member of AARC. Greg, loved "Field Day" and was active participant in setup, tear down and operating. The "Radio Breakfast" and "AARC Picnic" were also favorites. He was a regular net controller for the "AARC Wednesday Night Net", and a regular on the "Holly Net", subbing for Holly when she had a conflict, or needed to step away for a few minutes. What I remember most was that if you wanted to talk to someone all you had to do was call N2IQT, and he would come back for a nice QSO. He will be missed.

73
Jim Goldsberry KB3NQY

Happy



Thanksgiving

Excerpted from

The Ham Arundel News

Anne Arundel Radio Club

Davidsonville MD 21035

www.w3vpr.org

July 2005

(Editor's Note: All interest in the MSN is directed to Bob Baltz, N3MNT.)

What Is The MSN?

CQ MSN, CQ MSN CQ MSN DE W8CPG x MSN is the Maryland Slow Speed Traffic Net which meets here daily to train traffic handlers and pass traffic x All are welcome x MSN is now QND x please QNZ VVVVV VVVVV x QNN W8CPG/Bruce x MSN QNA MDD rep k.

This is the general call-up for the MSN. The net meets daily at 7:30 p.m. local time on 3563 kHz (with allowance for QRM - or man-made interference) for the purpose of training people in the art of handling traffic. Traffic is the term used for routine as well as emergency and health & welfare messages. Although our traffic is generally "routine" in nature, we are preparing for emergencies when practice leads into preparedness. Those birthday messages to Aunt Susie in WY may become messages requesting emergency medical personnel, ambulances, first aid equipment and supplies in the event of a disaster such as a flood or hurricane.

In traffic handling nets, there are procedures to follow that keep the net orderly instead of chaotic. For example, the NCS (Net Control Station) is the station in charge of the net. It's the NCS's job to be patient, polite, maintain order, and direct stations with traffic to send to the proper receiving stations. The long term goal is to get a message from its point of origin to a final destination that is within reach of a non-toll telephone call.

"Traffic," of course, is a formal "message" sent from one Amateur Radio station to another, to be delivered, usually via telephone, to the final recipient. ARRL numbered radiograms are a form of shorthand for traffic handling. Brevity is the key to efficiency and ARRL radiograms, which are expressed as "ARL xx," contain a pre-structured message that needs only to have a few blank spaces filled in. For example, ARL 46 says "Greetings on your birthday and best wishes for many more to come." So, a message can be constructed to Aunt Tilly that says, "Hi Aunt Tilly x ARL 46 x Love BT Suzie AR N" When the message is delivered to Aunt Tilly by telephone, the Ham Operator who calls her should first introduce himself as Ham Operator Fred from Lansing, Michigan and say, "I have a message from Suzie. She said, "Hi Aunt Tilly, Greetings on your birthday and best wishes for many more to come. Love, Suzie" ARL 56 says "Congratulations on your *(any event – birthday, graduation, new license, etc)*, a most worthy and deserved achievement." Again, you see that many words and time have been condensed into a clear and concise pre-constructed message. All of this is designed to make communications, even in difficult times, efficient and straightforward.

There is another shorthand - standard Q signals which are the professional shorthand for CW information exchange. We'll discuss these in Part II of the series.

MSN Training

Training on MSN is divided into 5 levels: Basic, Advanced, Liaison, Instructor and NCS.

The Basic level covers: how to check into a net; how stations are sent off net frequency to exchange traffic (lessons); learning the Q signals; how to properly construct a message; and how to ask for words that are missed or not understood.

In the Advanced level, you'll learn: the procedures for dealing with messages received and delivered; how book traffic (more than one identical message) is sent; participation in the Public Service Honor Roll (published in QST); proper delivery of messages; and the role of the Net Control Station.

The Liaison portion explains: the protocol for directing stations off net frequency to send and receive messages; how the regional and transcontinental nets operate, including sorting of traffic for proper destination; and maintaining a traffic log record.

The Instructor level provides a general understanding of how to operate as an instructor participating in a training net. This includes how messages are numbered; courtesy, patience, operating speed and understanding student's needs and concerns.

The NCS portion reiterates the need for patience and understanding; maintaining orderly net operations; checking stations into and out of the net as well as routing them to other frequencies to transact business; welcoming new student stations and preparing reports of net activity to the Net Manager.

How do we carry out our training? In order to convey the procedures involved in not only message preparation, but the complete operation of a traffic net, we present this information in the form of on-air messages. We follow a well prepared Training Manual most of which was prepared some 20 years ago by AARC members. Messages are prepared in accordance with the National Traffic System format outlined in the Public Service Communications Manual published by the ARRL and convey a specific piece of information regarding traffic net operation or protocol. The format consists of Preamble, Address, Text and Signature sections. Punctuation is not used except for the symbol BT which is used to separate the Address from the Text and Text from the Signature. This system helps to avoid the confusion and misunderstandings likely to result from "innovative" writers. Brevity is a key component of message composition and requires serious thought to develop a clear and concise statement or question.

Occasionally, the Instructors may quiz their students on how accurately they have copied a training message. The quiz may be in the form of a

request: “pse send me the address for msg nr xxx” In addition to testing the student’s copying skills, this quiz reinforces the point that the addressee is a critical part of the message. Just because this is a training session doesn’t mean that the address is frivolous. It’s important to treat each message as though it were a real message to be delivered to a real person. Instructors have the best interests of their students at heart.

Q signals are the CW shorthand which enable us to exchange potentially lengthy pieces of information with exceptional clarity and precision. Q signals and other pertinent traffic handling information are available on the “pink card” (FSD-218) available from the ARRL. Some examples: 1) if the NCS is late and another station steps in and calls the Net and the first QNI (check in) is the scheduled NCS, the operating NCS should say to the scheduled NCS “QNG?” which means “Will you take over as Net Control Station?” The scheduled NCS should respond “C,” (which means “yes”) and carry on with the Net. As you can see, QNG? (question), C (response) replaces many, many words and saves a great deal of time, yet retains clear communication; 2) if you can’t hear someone – your reply is QNP – nothing more is required. The statement: “I can kind of hear him but he’s pretty weak” doesn’t tell the NCS what he needs to know – simply QNP does the trick. As you can see, Q signals save valuable time and reduce unnecessary chit chat. We apply the Q signals, use standard abbreviations, do not check up on each other’s health on the net, stick to business, and can transact messages in amazingly short time amidst some of the worst QRN.

“Ok, all of this is great, but why do I care?” See Part III.

MSN - What’s in it for me?

There are many perks to training with MSN. One is the development of a skill – namely CW. Although the course begins with a relatively slow speed of about 10wpm (adjusted to meet student needs), as you progress you will notice that your CW operating speed has increased to perhaps 15-18wpm without you realizing it. Why should you care? CW takes up extremely small bandwidth and considerably less energy to convey info. So, in those ever-present circumstances of QRM and QRN, CW characters can be more easily understood than can the spoken word.

The most important thing that you will learn from MSN is proper traffic handling. Your skills will gain you welcome access to the many CW traffic nets. During emergency circumstances, those who have emergency operating skills and procedures well in hand will be called on and welcomed by local and national emergency communications systems. Your skills will be vital in a wide variety of emergency situations.

The MSN and CW traffic is far different from the fone band. With the MSN course, you will learn, via nearly 200 on-air messages, just how professional CW traffic nets are, or should be, conducted. If you decide to take the course, you will find yourself welcomed on any CW net anywhere as a skilled pro, well able to follow directions of the NCS, deal briefly with questions and not waste time with lengthy explanations of how hard it is to hear someone, how much QRN there is, etc. Learn your Q signals from the pink card and use them as your professional shorthand. .

The MSN instructors do a great job and are very patient as long as our students have a positive attitude and exhibit a desire to learn. To get the most out of MSN:

- spend some time with W1AW to practice your CW in between MSN sessions to help make your lessons easier and take less time;
- never QSL (accept) a message until you have copied it correctly, since these messages form your course textbook;
- be prepared by reading about nets in the ARRL Operating Manual and ARRL Net Directory;
- get some ARRL radiogram forms, so that you’re prepared to copy your lessons in the proper format and make your word counts faster and easier;
- be prepared to QSY (change frequency) when the NCS or your instructor tells you where to move (on MSN it’s usually up or down the band in increments of 3kHz, until you - the receiving station - find a clear spot where you are not interfering with another station).

I’m sure you will enjoy the course, if you’re really interested in building a good CW/ham skill. If you are willing to tackle a challenge with a great reward at the end, check into the MSN and ask for training information. I will send you a starter info packet regarding the net. After you receive the packet, check into MSN and ask for training message number one (nr 1), and you’ll be on your way.

Remember, when the fone lines are down, cell phones don’t work, the Internet is “gone” and SSB is as usual, the CW ops come through in grand style. For those with Internet access, there is a wealth of information available regarding the Maryland Slow Net at http://www.bdb.com/~msn/. Hope to see you at 7:30 p.m. on 3563 kHz.

73,

Bruce/W8CPG
MSN Net Manager
w8cpg@arrl.net

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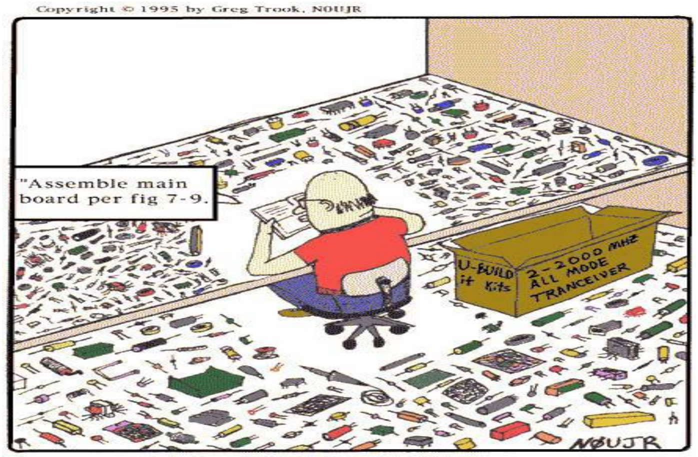

Kit fun.

AARC
Slate of Officers for 2015

President: Brian Mary, K3HMX
Vice Pres: Wayne Precht, AB3RY
Secretary: Jonathan Graefe, KB3ZVO
Treasurer: Justin Leishman, KC3BJT

Directors: **Vote for 3**
Mark Bova, W2PAW
Giff Hammar, K1GAH
Timothy Nagel, KB3YQK

Election will be December 4, 2014

REPEATER FREQUENCIES

Davidsonville	Millersville	Glen Burnie	Annapolis
147.105+		147.075+	
223.880-	224.560-		
444.400+			442.300+

PL: 107.2 for all repeaters

The 147.105 and 147.075 repeaters are frequently linked. Please leave an extra second after the courtesy beep to allow the link to reset as well.

Visitors are welcome *to all meetings and nets.*
Meetings are held in the Clubhouse at the
Davidsonville Family Recreation Center*,*
Queen Anne Bridge and Wayson Roads off
MD Route 214 near Davidsonville, MD.
For en-route directions,make initial contact on the 147.105 repeater.

Wednesday Night Talk Net -- All are welcome

8PM, On the AARC Repeater 147.105

Other Amateur Radio nets

Name	Frequency		Day	Time
Morning Commuter Net	147.105+	PL 107.2	Weekdays	0600
AA County ARES Net	146.805-Mhz	PL 107.2	Sunday	2000
Baltimore Traffic Net	146.670-Mhz		Daily	1830
Maryland Emergency Phone Net	3.820Mhz		Daily	1800
MD-DC-DE Traffic Net	3.557Mhz		Daily	1900 and 2200
Maryland Mobileers Net	146.805	PL107.2	Monday	1930
Maryland Slow Net	3.563 MHz		Daily	1930
REACT Net	442.300+Mhz	PL107.2	1st Sunday	1930

ARRL Executive Committee Adopts Mobile Amateur Radio Operation Policy

The ARRL Executive Committee adopted an updated **Policy Statement** on Amateur Radio mobile operation during its October 4 meeting in Memphis. While agreeing that driver inattention is a leading cause of auto accidents and that concern over driver distraction "is not unreasonable," the policy cites Amateur Radio's 70-year history of two-way mobile operation as evidence that such radio use does not contribute to driver inattention. The policy points out that Amateur Radio operation differs from cell phone communication, in part because the device need not be held to the face to listen, no text messaging is involved, and mobile ham operators only need to pick up a microphone to make "brief and infrequent" transmissions.

Prompting the policy update is the 2012 federal law "Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century" or MAP-21, which requires states to enact and enforce statutes that prohibit "texting through a personal wireless communications device while driving" in order to qualify for federal grants to support a state's program. The League "encourages the use of the language in MAP-21 in state statutes and municipal ordinances dealing with mobile telephone and mobile text-messaging limitations," the updated policy states.

Many states already have statutes in place that restrict the use of cell phones and other communication devices to a greater or lesser degree, and several exempt Amateur Radio. A lot of these laws predate MAP-21, however, and because MAP-21 permits no specific exception for Amateur Radio operation, some may need to be revised in order to comply with its requirements. The ARRL is urging states or localities to adopt motor vehicle codes that narrowly define the class of regulated devices, in order to exclude Amateur Radio specifically.

"Given the necessity of unrestricted mobile Amateur Radio communications in order for the benefits of Amateur Radio to the public to continue to be realized, ARRL urges state and municipal legislators considering restrictions on mobile cellular telephone operation and mobile text messaging to narrowly define the class of devices included in the regulation, so that the class includes only full-duplex wireless telephones and related hand-held or portable equipment," the League policy recommends.

The ARRL policy suggests statutory language for state and local motor vehicle codes that defines a "personal wireless communications device" as one through which "commercial mobile services, unlicensed wireless services, and common carrier wireless exchange access services are transmitted." This would include such devices as cell phones and anything used for text messaging or paging, but the suggested wording specifically excludes "two-way radio communications equipment, such as that used in the Amateur Radio Service."

For states or localities considering banning all but hands-free cell phone use, the ARRL recommended wording that would prohibit the use of a personal wireless communications device "in any manner" while driving, unless the motorist is using hands-free capability. The suggested statutory language would not apply to anyone using the device while the vehicle is parked or "to contact or receive calls from an emergency response vehicle or agency."

ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, **addressed** the issue in his November 2013 *QST* "It Seems to Us" editorial, "Distracted Driving Legislation: Proceed with Caution." In the editorial, Sumner wrote, "For decades, radio amateurs have been operating while driving without being perceived as a threat to highway safety. In the face of legislation to ban unsafe practices such as texting while driving it is natural to want clear exemptions for Amateur Radio — but beware of unintended consequences."

Sumner described one of those "unintended consequences" relating to Connecticut's distracted driving statute, which the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) advised was not in compliance with MAP-21, because its Amateur Radio exception was not one of the three permitted under the law. Connecticut revised its law in 2013 to limit the use of a hand-held radio by an Amateur Radio operator to emergencies only — "exactly what we were hoping to avoid," Sumner wrote.

As further evidence of Amateur Radio's mobile safety record, the policy points to a 2009 letter to the ARRL from the National Safety Council. In the letter, the Council said it neither had nor was aware of evidence that using Amateur Radio or two-way radio while driving posed significant crash risks. "Until such time as compelling, peer-reviewed scientific research is presented that denotes significant risks associated with the use of amateur radios, two-way radios or other communication devices, the NSC does not support legislative bans or prohibition on their use," the Council said.

A 1994 joint congressional resolution expressed support for Amateur Radio as national policy and declared that "reasonable accommodation be made" for effective Amateur Radio operation "from residences, private vehicles, and public areas," and that laws should "facilitate and encourage Amateur Radio operation as a public benefit."

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ARES Groups and Individuals Should Protect Passwords

The ARRL released a news article recently concerning the hacking of a server in the League's network late last month. That article can be found here. My professional background is in digital forensic investigations and includes teaching in the Digital Forensics and Cyber Security program at Valencia College in Orlando (Florida) so I'd like to make some cyber security suggestions to readers.

If your password on arrl.org hasn't been changed since before early 2010, you need to change it now. If your password is newer than early 2010, I'd recommend that it be changed as a precautionary measure. If you've utilized the same password on arrl.org and other websites, especially if those other websites are banking and finance related, you need to change the passwords on those sites as well.

Hackers will use passwords from one compromised website to attempt to access the person's accounts on other websites. Ideally each website that you access should have a unique password; likewise, each email account you have should have a unique password. Passwords should be made up of a combination of upper case letters, lower case letters, numbers, and symbols including: !@#$%^&*()_+=-.?<>,. (note: not all websites will accept all of those symbols in a password). Passwords should not be such easily guessed things as the names of relatives and pets. The best passwords are random strings rather than names and words and should be 8 characters or longer.

Now the question that this immediately generates is how do I remember dozens or hundreds of random passwords? The answer is that you don't; you only need to memorize one that is a master password used by software that secures all of the information for all of your email/website accounts. There are many such programs available, both paid and free, that can securely protect your passwords on your home computer, your mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets, and on a flash drive so you can have them available wherever you are.

Because everyone's needs are different, I won't advise using any particular solution. I will, however, give you an example of a free solution for PCs that has also been ported to most other platforms. The software is named "Password Safe" and is available at no cost from: http://passwordsafe.sourceforge.net/ (click on the "Download latest version" found on that page to access the program itself). http://pwsafe.org/relatedprojects.shtml has information on ports of Password Safe to other platforms. Again this is not an endorsement of this program, just an example of what is available.

One of the Motions I prepared for the July 2014 ARRL Board Meeting was for the creation of an IT Strategic Planning Committee. The committee would be tasked with examining the existing Information Technology operations of the League and creating a strategic plan for addressing current and future needs. The committee would be composed of Directors and Vice Directors having a current background in Information Technology. An edited Motion was passed, directing the Administration and Finance Committee of the Board to study establishing the IT Strategic Planning Committee and provide recommendations to the Board at the January 2015 meeting. I'll report back when I know more. -- *ARRL Southeastern Division Director Doug Rehman, K4AC, k4ac@arrl.org*

Used with permissionThe ARES Letter, October 15, 2014

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Are knobs and buttons toast?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

In a recent column on EETimes (http://www.eetimes.com/author.asp?doc_id=1324283), an old colleague of mine, Martin Rowe, says, “Knobs and buttons are slowly on their way out. Get used to it.” He’s referring to the controls on oscilloscopes, but if he were a ham, he might just as well be talking about amateur radio transceivers, too.

We already see this happening in amateur radio. FlexRadio, and a couple of other companies, already make transceivers with no front panel controls. You must have a computer to use them.

Might we even start to see this with handheld and portable equipment? For example, how much cheaper could they make a Baofeng if to use it, you had to also have an Android or iPhone app to act as the human interface?

To be honest, I haven’t really thought about this much myself. I’m enough of a dinosaur to still prefer buttons and knobs, but having to use on-screen controls certainly doesn't turn me off. Rowe claims, however, that “as the old-timers retire (or in our case as older hams become SKs), younger engineers (or young hams) will expect every user interface to function like a phone or tablet. Don’t believe me? Just wait.”

I got several interesting replies to this idea on my blog. Bill, AD8BC says, "What would be fun would be an open-source mobile radio. I picture an RF deck with a Raspberry Pi and touch screen for control, the Pi would simply tell the RF deck where to tune and handle the interface and scanning functions, it would ship with a stock app, but you could make your own. Built in support for SDR stuff, packet, APRS, remote operation…."

Most commenters, however, even the younger guys, still seem to prefer analog controls. Lucien, DH7LM, says, "I’m a newly licensed ham and I like both – experimenting with advanced computer stuff like SDRs and the great feeling a real radio provides!" Grant, KJ6ZZD, says, "Knobs perform some tasks better than a screen can. Knobs provide some tactile feedback that a screen just can’t."

So, what do you think? Are knobs and buttons toast, or do you think there's still some life left in analog controls?

73 KB6NU

When not twiddling the knobs on his HF transceiver or relatively ancient Tek 2213 analog oscilloscope, you'll find KB6NU working on updates to his "No Nonsense" study guides or blogging about amateur radio at www.kb6nu.com.

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