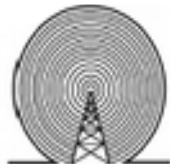


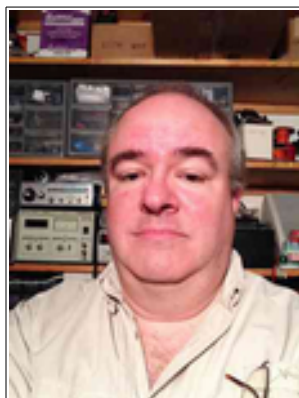
# The Ham Arundel News



Providing Fellowship and Community Service through Amateur Radio Since 1951

November 2015

37<sup>th</sup> Year of Publication



## The Prez Sez...

It's November, the month of elections and turkey (oftentimes combined)! Speaking of which, we will be holding elections for officers and directors at the next regular meeting – see the official notice in this newsletter. The slate should be relatively familiar, as it's comprised of the current officers and directors.

I'll let you all slide this year, but next year we will need some folks to step up and volunteer to help run the club. Please keep in mind that everything that happens in the club is because of volunteers – from running the club to cleaning the clubhouse – it all gets done because people give their time to make AARC a great club. As we get ready to make resolutions for the coming year, give some thought toward what you could do to help make our club even better.

According to ARRL, we're doing pretty good, though. We just received notice that we have been designated a Special Service Club for 2016. AARRL defines a Special Service Club as:

*"A club that exists to go above and beyond for their communities and for Amateur Radio is what defines a Special Service Club (SSC). They are the leaders in their Amateur Radio communities who provide active training classes, publicity programs and actively pursue technical projects and operating activities."*

To achieve this designation, we had to submit an application which detailed our efforts in New Ham Development and Training, Public Relations, Emergency Communications, Technical Advancement, Operating Activities, and Miscellaneous Activities (defined as special interests and activities that make our club unique). We received a nice letter and a banner from the league, which we will display in the clubhouse. More importantly, there wouldn't have been anything to write about if it weren't for all of our members. You're the ones that make all of these things happen – and I don't mean just the committee

chairs and board members! We wouldn't have such a strong presence in Emergency Communications and Public Relations if we didn't have such good turnouts at all the events we support. And you know one of the things that makes our club unique is the Holly Net. I'm guessing that pretty much sealed the deal when they read about that!

Please take a look at the website, we have a few more public service events coming up. Help is still needed for the Rosaryville 50k on Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup>. Contact Paul Bowling, W4ATN, if you can help, even half a day would be greatly appreciated. After that is the Cold Turkey 10k on Sunday the 22nd, and Mike Montrose, KA2JAI, will be coordinating that one and could use some help as well.

Also, please mark your calendars for the Holiday Party which will be on Friday, December 11<sup>th</sup> at Ford Hall. Look for details and sign up information on the website soon. Meanwhile, I hope you and yours have a festive Thanksgiving!

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## 2016 Dues Are Now Accepted Online.

Welcome to November. Hopefully we all survived the hoard of trick-r-treat participants that frequented our doors last night. The club website now is accepting dues payments for 2016. Because Paypal charges a fee to process credit cards the dues will be \$1.50 more online to cover that fee. If you wish to renew by mail or in person there is no additional fees.

The Board voted and the membership also accepted a dues increase to:

- Individual membership: \$30.00
- Family Membership: \$45.00
- Student Membership: \$15.00

If you wish to pay by mailing a check the club's mailing address is:

AARC  
PO Box 308  
Davidsonville, MD 21035

In person we will accept cash and checks. You can give your dues payments to any member of the board who will forward them to the secretary Jon KB3ZVO or Treasurer Justin KC3BJT for processing.

Thank You  
Jonathan Graefe KB3ZVO, AARC Secretary

# **AARC**

## **Slate of Officers for 2016**

In accordance with the bylaws, this serves to notify AARC members of the upcoming Election of Directors. The slate for the upcoming election is as follows:

**President:** Brian Mary / K3HMX  
**Vice Pres:** Wayne Precht / AB3RY  
**Secretary:** Jonathan Grafe / KB3ZVO  
**Treasurer:** Justin Leishman / KC3BJT

**Directors: (Vote for 3)**  
Mark Bova / W2PAW  
Giff Hammar / K1GAH  
Timothy Nagel / KB3YQK

**The election will be held at the next regular meeting,  
November 17<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 p.m. at the AARC Clubhouse.**

## Putting Contesting to Work for Your Public Service Team

Operating skill is not something that can be tested on a license exam or learned from a book. Emergency managers know that practice - lots of it - is required for operators to be sharp when they are really needed. Repeating drill after drill can get old but there are other enjoyable ways to give your equipment a good shakedown and build on-the-air know-how. Just as sports keep you physically fit, "radiosport" or contesting can serve as a training ground while having fun at the same time.

First, you don't need a huge, multi-tower station to participate. A comm trailer or EOC probably has everything you need for success, particularly if you choose the right contest. You can start simply with any of a number of regional FM simplex contests that encourage the use of mobile and handheld FM radios for an afternoon or evening. Just search the Internet for "FM simplex contest" to find several. For example, in the St Louis area, the [St Louis and Suburban Radio Club](#) sponsors an occasional "ZIP code contest" in which hams operate from home or a car and count the different ZIP codes as multipliers. Operation takes place on the usual simplex FM channels from 147.42 MHz to 147.56 MHz for four hours on a weekend evening. This is a great way to learn about squelch management, copying weak signals, using phonetics, and the effectiveness of good locations and antennas! No contest in your area? Work with the local clubs to start one.

Instead of jumping into a big DX contest, try the domestic contests such as the upcoming [November Sweepstakes](#) or December's [10 Meter Contest](#). The low dipole you use for regional communications will work lots of stations - more than you might imagine. A multiband vertical will work great on 10 meters or put up a temporary dipole for the weekend. Farther in the future, check out the [North American QSO Parties](#) with their easy name-and-state exchange and low-power signals. [Look up your own state's QSO party](#) and activate your county or parish for hours of fun with callers chasing YOU for a change. If your club has VHF SSB gear, there are regular VHF contests. If your team uses digital modes to exchange text and files, try a digital mode contest with RTTY and PSK keyboard-to-keyboard operating.

Trying to pack an entire team into the shack can be counterproductive. A couple of people have a lot of fun while the rest watch and get bored. If you have enough interest, divide your group into two- or three-person teams that operate in shifts with an experienced operator to mentor and guide (and log). Better yet, put the teams at different stations and let them go head-to-head in a short challenge. No one says you have to operate the entire contest, either. Pick times that work - maybe about as long as your regular drills - and get together afterward for the usual "hot wash" or maybe just a little story-telling session over pizza.

A "contest Elmer" can help those new to contesting with scripts guiding the operators through a QSO. Start each team of operators with a period of listening so they have some time to get up to speed. Show them how to tune in an SSB signal, operate the necessary

receiver controls, and the abbreviated style of calling and answering. Using paper log sheets can work at first but you'll find that simple logging software like that available from [N3FJP](#) is easy and intuitive to learn. Let one operator talk and one operator log - then swap.

Once your team gets up to speed, reinforce the reasons why we have contests in the first place: accurate, effective operating. Place a special emphasis on getting call signs and exchanges 100% correct. Making a lot of contacts is good but not at the expense of errors. Help operators make good use of primary radio controls to increase clarity on receive and transmit: filters, RF gain, AGC, RIT/XIT, and others can make a surprising improvement in copying ability. Watch for teachable moments such as unusual and changing propagation, small pileups of callers, confusing letters, and clean vs distorted signal audio.

The hours will fly by and when it's over, you'll have some operators anxious to try again. It's a good way to introduce non-hams to Amateur Radio, too. Why not invite a CERT or SKYWARN volunteer to sit in and make a contact? Don't forget to submit a log - no matter how small - and watch for your team's call sign in the final results. You might even get lucky and win a certificate. Could a [Worked All States](#) award be in your team's future?

Regardless of how many contacts you make, when interspersed with your regular drills and exercises contesting offers a great change of pace while advancing everyone's abilities at little or no cost. See you in the pileups! -- *Ward Silver, NØAX, St Charles, Missouri; Member, St Charles Amateur Radio Club and ARES Rapid Response Team; QST Contributing Editor.*

Used with permission ARRL ARES E-Letter Oct.22, 2015

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## What You Are Not

*[The following is excerpted from the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) publication [IARU Emergency Telecommunications Guide](#). (2015) A PDF file of the document can be found [here](#). While this guide was developed primarily to provide IARU member-societies around the globe with materials suitable for training their members to provide radio communications support in emergency/disaster events, it also contains principles and concepts that are universal to all Amateur Radio and ARES operators who are learning the culture of providing such support via Amateur Radio. I thought that the following excerpt was particularly helpful in understanding our role as ARES members. - ed.]*

As important as what you are, is what you are not. There are limits to your responsibilities as an emergency communicator, and it is important to know where to draw the line.

You are not a "first responder." Except in rare cases of chance, you will seldom be first on the scene. You do not need flashing lights and sirens, gold badges, or fancy uniforms.

You have no authority. In most cases, you cannot make decisions for others, or make demands on the agency you serve or any other agency. The only decisions you can make are whether to participate or not, and those

affecting your own health and safety.

*You are not in charge. You are there to temporarily fulfill the needs of an agency whose communication system is unable to completely do its job. They tell you what they need, and you do your best to comply.*

*Used with permission ARRL ARES E-Letter Oct.22, 2015*

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## **ARRL Asks FCC to Clarify that Hams May Modify Non-Amateur Gear for Amateur Use**

The ARRL has asked the FCC to make clear that Amateur Radio licensees may modify non-amateur equipment for use on Amateur Radio frequencies. Some hams have expressed concerns that recently proposed rules would inhibit post-sale modification of Wi-Fi equipment, now sometimes altered for use on Amateur Radio frequencies. The ARRL made its point in comments filed on October 8 on a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) in ET Docket 15-170 and RM-11673. The proceeding mostly addresses proposed amendments to FCC rules regarding authorization of RF equipment. The NPRM can be found on the web in PDF format at, [https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/FCC-15-92A1.pdf](https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-15-92A1.pdf) . "The Commission should clarify...that the ability of licensed radio amateurs to modify and adapt non-amateur equipment for use in the Amateur Service is beneficial, is permitted, and is not restricted by any rule of general applicability adopted in this proceeding," the League said in its comments. The ARRL said proposed rules requiring manufacturers to include security features to prevent network devices from being modified were "problematic," to the extent that they would preclude hams from adapting network equipment for ham radio applications.

"The Amateur Radio Service has a very long tradition of modification and adaptation of commercial communications equipment," the ARRL's comments pointed out. Amateur licensees should be permitted to modify any previously authorized equipment for use under Amateur Service rules, the League asserted. The proceeding attracted many comments regarding this aspect of the proceeding, although the proposed rules differ only slightly from the current rules.

The ARRL also urged the FCC not to apply any limitations proposed for Software Defined Radios to SDRs intended for use exclusively in the Amateur Radio Service, "as has been the policy for the past 10 years."

### **Equipment Authorization**

The League also has called on the Commission not to combine the Declaration of Conformity (DoC) and Verification equipment authorization procedures into a single, self-approval program. The League said the proposal could lead to abuse by unscrupulous importers and manufacturers of unintentional emitters. Under the proposed rules, the FCC would do away with its DoC authorization program by combining it with equipment Verification to form a so-called "Suppliers Declaration of Conformity" category of equipment authorization. Testing in an accredited laboratory would not be required, nor would database registration or third-party review. The ARRL expressed concerns that the new regime would encourage

and facilitate the introduction into the US of "non-compliant unintentional emitters" and offer no oversight.

The ARRL's comments said, "the only opportunity to preclude widespread sale and deployment of non-compliant RF devices, including unintentional emitters, is via the equipment authorization process." The League said hams and AM broadcasters have been victims of interference from such unintentional emitters as RF lighting ballasts "that routinely exceed the Commission's conducted emission limits." The ARRL said the solution is "not to loosen but to tighten the procedural controls over the testing and affirmative confirmations of compliance" to ensure greater compliance in conducted limits and other technical parameters that determine how much such devices contribute to ambient noise levels.

The League said some RF devices, such as RF "grow lights," now subject to the more informal Verification process should be subject to Certification, owing to their substantial interference potential.

The ARRL noted that it has received and investigated "numerous reports of interference" from devices subject only to Verification. "A number of interfering devices, when tested by the ARRL Laboratory, have been found to exceed the FCC limits, sometimes by an alarming amount," the League said. Improved Labeling for Part 15 and Part 18 Devices

The ARRL also said there is "an urgent need" for improved labeling requirements for certain Part 15 and Part 18 devices. "Necessitating change, notably, is the fact that there are many industrial Part 18 devices sold that are neither intended nor designed for use in residential environments, but because there is no external labeling...the end user consumer is left without guidance," the ARRL said, noting that, in most cases, equipment retailers are not providing any either.

In July, the ARRL complained to the FCC about the marketing practices of various "big box" retailers, where non-consumer-rated lighting ballasts have been mixed in with consumer ballasts and other consumer products on display with no explanatory signage.

Ballasts intended for industrial applications have higher permitted conducted emission limits in the Amateur Radio HF spectrum. The League called on the FCC to include a definition in Part 18 for the

term "consumer RF lighting device," to provide a way to differentiate consumer devices from those intended for industrial or commercial environments.

The League also said the FCC should consider reducing its Part 15 limits for lighting devices to correspond with the Part 18 lighting device limits between 3 and 30 MHz to reduce the RFI potential of

LED bulbs now being widely marketed, "before they become an aggregate problem." LED lamps operate under Part 15 rules.

The ARRL said the FCC should adopt the League's new equipment-labeling proposals with respect to certain Part 15 and Part 18 equipment "in order to stop the flood of such devices intended for commercial or industrial areas only into residential areas."

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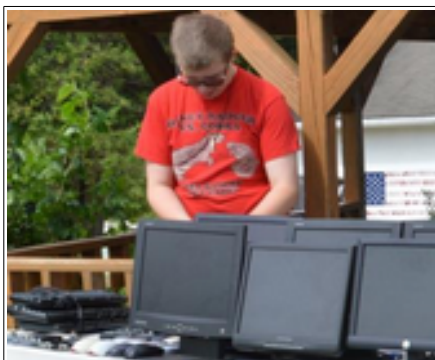


## The AARC Picnic

Here are some pics of the picnic. The weather was awesome and we had 27 members show up, a couple of kids and 2 dogs. We had about half a dozen vendors tailgating to give folks a chance at some great used stuff. We had Rich KB3ZYO making fresh potato chips on demand. Good time for everyone.

Thanks

Wayne / AB3RY.



This was a great day.

Good food  
Good Fellowship  
Good fun

**Hope to see you  
next year!**



## A new Heathkit! So, why am I not excited?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

A couple of weeks ago I got an e-mail from Heathkit. Yes, the NEW Heathkit. you might remember that a couple of years ago, there was all this hype about a "new" Heathkit and how they were going to start designing new kits as well as revive popular old designs.

Then, nothing. They went completely quiet—until a couple of weeks ago. In an e-mail sent to their "insiders," they say:

"Dear Heathkit Insider,

'What I really hope Heathkit will produce,' a Silicon Valley colleague recently told me, 'is a new radio kit with a beautiful finish, maybe in rosewood.' Something great to enjoy building and learn from, and also visually stunning, so he could put it in his living room and keep it forever.

"Today, my friend gets his wish.

They then go on to explain all of the work they've been doing in relocating Heathkit to Santa Cruz, CA, acquiring a second company, and securing all the intellectual property rights to the old Heathkit manuals and logos (meaning no more bootleg copies on the Internet). The e-mail continues:

"That's a lot, but there's more. We've designed and developed a wide range of entirely new kit products. We authored the manuals for these kits, complete with the beautiful line art you rely on, preserving and respecting our iconic historic Heathkit style. We developed many new inventions and filed patents on them.....We built the back office infrastructure, vendor and supply chain relationships, systems, procedures, operations methods, and well-thought-out corporate structure that a manufacturing company needs to support its customers, to allow us to scale instantly the day we resume major kit sales. All this effort enables us to introduce a fleet of new kits and helps ensure Heathkit can grow, prosper, and continue to bring you great new products for a very long time."

So, what's the exciting news? A new QRP transceiver? Maybe a shortwave radio? A new 100-in-1 experimenter kit for Makers?

Uh-uh. Sorry. The "exciting" news is a tuned radio frequency (TRF) AM band (yes, I said AM band) radio kit that costs \$150.

(<https://shop.heathkit.com/shop/product/explorer-jr-trf-am-radio-receiver-kit-black-case-gr-150-bk-16>). Not only is that crazy expensive for an AM radio, it doesn't even come with a speaker. On top of that, there's no soldering. You screw all of the components to the board. I'm speechless (well, figuratively, not literally).

I'm not sure what the target market is for this product. It's certainly not amateur radio operators, who expect a lot more (in terms of both functionality and "fun") for their money. Nor is it the "Maker" folks, who want something more challenging than an AM radio. I think that if I took this to show off at the local Ann Arbor Maker group, they'd laugh me out of the place.

I really hope that they have something better up their sleeves. A strong Heathkit would be good for the

Maker movement and for ham radio.

When not thinking about what kit to build next, Dan, KB6NU, operates CW on the HF bands (mostly 40m and 30m). His #1-rated amateur radio blog can be found at KB6NU.Com, and you can e-mail questions, comments, or complaints to [cwgeek@kb6nu.com](mailto:cwgeek@kb6nu.com).

## Use of 146.52 MHz FM Simplex Frequency Cleared for ARRL Contests



The ARRL Programs and Services Committee earlier this year unanimously adopted a recommendation from its VHF and Above Revitalization Committee to remove the rule prohibiting the use of 146.52 MHz

simplex for making contest contacts. The change becomes effective in 2016, starting with the ARRL January VHF Contest.

The VHF and Above Revitalization Committee concluded that the restriction was no longer necessary. The committee felt that permitting the use of 146.52 MHz would allow new/curious contesters possessing only FM-mode radios to stumble upon more contacts, increasing their chances of being drawn further into VHF+ contesting — the primary aim of the Revitalization Committee.

The change will also be incorporated into the [ARRL Field Day](#) rules. This change eliminates Rule 1.8 in the ["General Rules for ARRL Contests Above 50 MHz,"](#) with subsequent Rule 1 sections renumbered accordingly. — Thanks to Dan Henderson, N1ND, Regulatory Information Manager/Acting Contest Manager  
Usec with Permission ARRL Letter Oct 29 2015

thanksgiving  
gather  
thankful family  
blessed grateful  
together  
blessings  
november