



Virginia Section NEWS

#10

April 29, 2020

Mountain ARES GOES “ZOOM” (And you thought ZOOM was for the City Slickers)}

**Amateur Radio Goes ‘Zoom’
by Dwight M. Rohr, W4SPJ**

Since day one of the Coronavirus, the club station, W4COV, in the Jeter-Watson Center was closed to the public. However, this disease did not stop the planning and drill meetings of the Mountain Amateur Radio Emergency Service.

Janet Lacks, KK4ZDK, vice president and net manager, Mountain ARES, said, “We set up an account with Zoom for teleconferencing and it is working well for us.” Lacks said, “We talk weekly as a group on Zoom following our weekly two-meter net on radio.” she continued, “the results have been fantastic, and we will continue until we get back in our club station.”

Routine business of MARES, the right arm of the Virginia Mountain Amateur Radio Club, and special business of the club that is not suitable for talking on Amateur Radio are held in the teleconference. Club members are talking remotely and individually from their home and mobile station during the station’s facility closure.



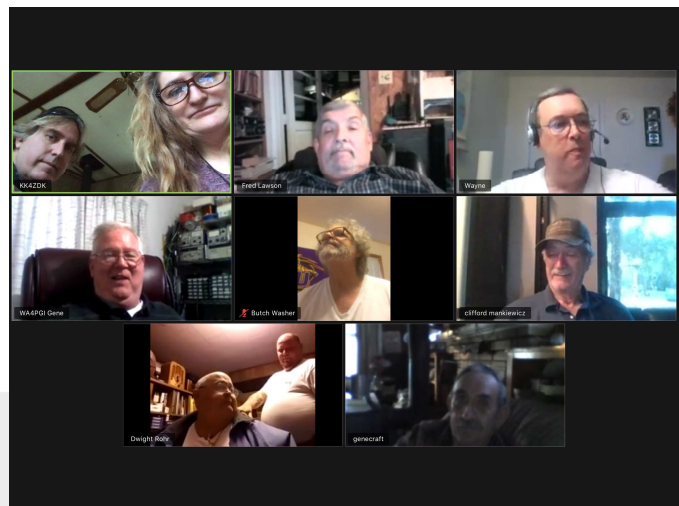
During the recent Virginia QSO, thousands of points were gathered when the main station call sign was moved to Howard 'Gene' Wood's WA4PGI station in Covington, VA.

Several other VMARC (MARES) members took to the air from their homes with the goal of contacting stations within each county of Virginia.

The Virginia QSO Party is like a fun fishing expedition, you never know who and how many contacts you can make during the weekend. The party also acts as a drill and improves efficiency in making contacts should MARES be called into a disaster or other emergency communications.

While the results of the Zoom conferencing are successful, the totals for the QSO party will not be announced by the American Radio Relay League for several weeks. Membership is open to any person who successfully passes a VE Test on the Technician level and higher. There are three license privileges to be had. The technician is the first and simplest license to obtain. A book on each of these three classes can be purchased at arrl.org.

Amateur radio operators have enjoyed the opportunity to have extra time from work for talking on amateur radio during the Coronavirus. MARES is the right arm of the Virginia Mountain Amateur Radio Club and stands ready to assist other public service groups involved in emergency service.





**Received from Bob Zobot, K4NTO, President, Virginia Beach
Amateur Radio Club**

Contest University will be held online free via Zoom on Thursday May 14th

www.contestuniversity.com

8:45 Welcome to CTU 2020 from W8CI, K3LR and N9JA

9:00 W3LPL – “Effective Low Band Receiving Antennas”

**10:00 W2NAF – “2020 Solar Cycle Update and the HF Response to
Ionospheric Storms and Traveling Ionospheric Disturbances”**

**11:00 N6TV – “Everything You Need to Know About USB and Serial
Interfaces”**

12:00 Lunch on your own

12:25 K1AR – Memorial reading of the Silent Keys for 2020

**12:30 NN1C – “Exuberance and Youth Contesting – Update on What is
Going On”**

1:00 W0YK – “Digital Contesting Hints & Kinks”.

2:00 K1DG – “Optimizing your Station for Contest Operations”.

3:00 N0AX – “Grounding & Bonding”

**4:00 NC0B – “Contest & DX Performance A Complex Subject Today Great
RX Performance – TX Limitations”**

5:00 W3LPL – “60 Years of Competitive Contesting — the W3LPL Story”

6:00 K3ZJ – Presentation of CQ Contest Hall Of Fame 2020



Reprinted from the ARRL ARES-E Letter, April 15, 2020

A Win-Win with *WinLink Wednesday*

Greg Butler, KW6GB, put his vision into action to develop the widely successful *WinLink Wednesday*, with check-ins rapidly increasing. It began in the southern California desert, with Butler's professional duties that included emergency management. While completing graduate studies in the subject, he became aware of the need for Amateur Radio to be part of his own personal preparedness plan.

Knowing that his neighborhood could be impacted by a major earthquake, Butler explored options for transmitting detailed messages to the outside of the potential disaster area. WinLink fit the bill perfectly. Because there were no VHF RMS gateways within range of his station, he used WinLink exclusively on HF to reach distant RMS stations.

After retiring in 2014, Butler moved to the Shenandoah Valley in northern Virginia, and joined the county Amateur Radio emergency communications group where WinLink was used. But, irregular use led to inconsistent operator confidence. Furthermore, the Deputy Emergency Manager deemed it critical to be able to communicate with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), separated from the Shenandoah Valley by the Blue Ridge Mountains, in the event that a disaster compromised communications. Butler determined that both challenges could be overcome with regular practice.

Turning Winning Vision into Practice

Butler announced a one-time net to gauge interest, inviting hams to send a simple WinLink message to him anytime during the day of Wednesday, August 24, 2016. Sixteen stations sent messages from around Virginia. *WinLink Wednesday* was born and became a weekly event. By the close of 2018, no fewer than nine of those original participants continued to participate each Wednesday.

To prevent participation from becoming just a rote exercise and to encourage the transmission of timely, useful information, Butler requested that check-

ins send a brief weather snapshot. That practice continues today. At the same time, the first Peer-to-Peer (P2P) session

was held. Butler invited operators to check in during a WINMOR P2P session, bypassing the need for Internet connectivity. Four stations took advantage of that opportunity. Peer-to-Peer sessions continue each week, using varied session types.

To further expand user capabilities, Butler asked participants to check in using an attached, WinLink-native ICS-213 General Message form. The purpose was to encourage users to become comfortable with the commonly used form used to transmit or receive messages for a served agency. This practice continues to today.



Greg Butler, KW6GB, creator of *WinLink Wednesday*. (photo courtesy KW4GF)

Butler encourages regular practice in the use of WinLink in all of its various modes, including Packet, WINMOR, ARDOP, VARA, and PACTOR. Butler provides step-by-step instructions on how and when to participate in *WinLink Wednesday*, and how to use the ICS-213 form to check in.

The Vienna (Virginia) Wireless Society recorded a presentation by Butler and posted it to YouTube; see it [here](#).

In addition to the primary *WinLink Wednesday* net, Butler encouraged regular participants to host WinLink VHF Packet P2P Subnets in their home areas. Currently, four such subnets operate each week across Virginia

Winning Statistics

By the time *WinLink Wednesday* completed three years of continuous operation in August 2019, no fewer than 250 unique Virginia stations had participated at least once, and 32 operators had earned their *WinLink Wednesday Century Club* (WWCC) certificates, recognizing 100 weeks of participation. Butler's vision of an effective WinLink network is being realized.

An exercise plan currently in draft form will simulate the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) requesting ground truth disaster information from



the local level, exclusively using WinLink Peer-to-Peer communications, both HF and VHF. This exercise will measure the ability to integrate the WinLink VHF Packet P2P Subnets with the Statewide HF P2P net for the benefit of VDEM.

Butler and now many others are convinced that WinLink is an essential tool for the emergency communicator's toolbox. Amateur radio operators are training for serious problems while having fun learning and working with their equipment, a win-win proposition. Try *WinLink Wednesday!* -- [Ed Gibbs, KW4GF](#) [Gibbs is Virginia Section Public Information Officer, and past President, Vice President, and Secretary of the Virginia Beach Amateur Radio Club. [Greg Butler, KW6GB](#), leads the Warren County Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Group in northwestern Virginia and sits on the Warren County LEPC and the Warren Memorial Hospital Emergency Management Committee.

Why Don't I Ever Hear From My ARRL Officials?"

By Bill Morine, N2COP

ARRL Roanoke Division Vice Director

This is a common question ARRL officials like me hear at hamfests and club meetings. Many members don't realize you need to "opt-in" under your member profile on ARRL's website. The reason for this is for ARRL to comply with privacy laws. Opting-In is easy. Below is a screenshot from the ARRL website on where you find this selection. Log in as you normally would, then next to your name on the main page click on "Edit Profile". Once inside that section click on the selection entitled "Edit Subscriptions". This will take you to the page shown here. While you're on this page, take a look at the many other notices and mailings you can get as part of your membership. Enjoy reading about your section and what's happening in your division! 73 de Bill, N2COP

See Below for the ARRL Page to Opt-In



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Email Subscriptions

- Temporarily disable all automatically sent email
- Notification of ARRL membership expiration
- Notification of license expiration
- Notification of monthly digital edition of QST
- The ARRL email newsletter, The ARRL Letter
- ARRL Contest Update (biweekly contest newsletter)
- The ARES E-Letter (monthly public service and emergency communications news)
- The ARRL Club News (monthly club news)
- ARRL Instructor/Teacher E-Letter (Radio Waves)
- The IARU E-Letter (International Amateur Radio Union news)
- News and information from your Division Director and Section Manager (Note: Some Divisions/Sections may not send notices.)**
- Publication Announcements and Special offers
- ARRL Legislative Update
- ARRL Board meeting agendas and minutes
- W1AW bulletins
 - General/Special
 - DX
 - Propagation
 - Satellite
 - Keplerian



APRIL 2020 VIRGINIA SECTION UPDATE LETTER

This month's report is late due to COVID-19 and the many problems created by the effects of the virus on my work situation as well as family obligations. I know these problems and newly created obligations have affected everyone. We all pray for more and faster testing as well as quicker resolution to all of the economic and unemployment problems the virus created.

ARES – The CONNECT program is moving along with more agencies such as Franklin County, Charlotte County, City of Williamsburg, Northumberland County, and City of Poquoson are some of the new sign ups. Since the recent change to establish 8 ARES Regions instead of 15 ARES districts required the appointment of new Regional Emergency Communications Managers. Finding individuals who are known in these areas that have experience and dedication to manage, is always difficult and time consuming. Of course recommendations to our SEC are always welcome. Contact: sec@aresva.us


VDEM – The meeting scheduled for April 22, 2020 has been cancelled and will be rescheduled.

Armed Forces Day events have been postponed and they are looking at rescheduling possibly for Veterans Day in November as a makeup event.

Virginia Section Public Information Coordinator, Ed Gibbs KW4GF is setting up round tables for clubs, including all local and regional PIC's to be able to exchange ideas and information on a regular basis. The object is to get more visibility for amateur radio to the general public as well as ARRL HQ for public service events in addition to emergency communications capabilities.

HAMFESTS - Delaware State Convention and Hamfest set for April 18, has been cancelled. Winterfest, Virginia Section Convention, in Fairfax, VA, has been rescheduled for March 14, 2021. Dayton is cancelled for 2020.

ARRL - FIELD DAY – 2020 is still being discussed as to what we can expect and as well as what will be allowed to do for that event, at this time. We will update information as we get it.



Many Ham clubs have started to hold meetings via Zoom as this video conference has been become very popular.

Eastern VHF/UHF Conference has been cancelled.

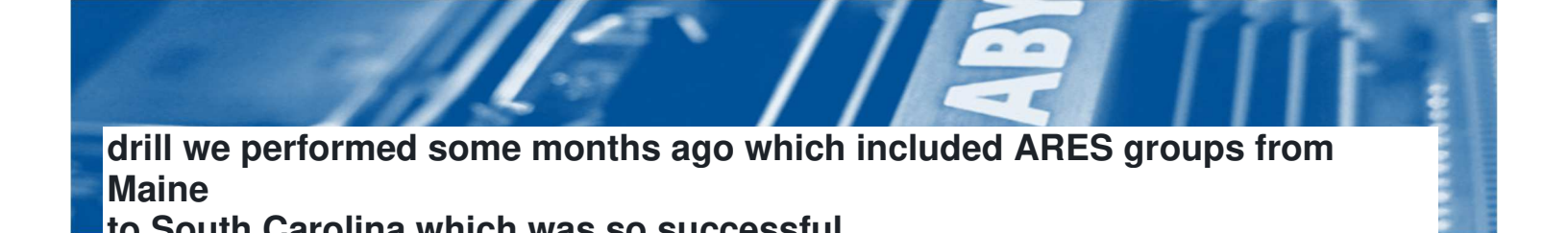
Recent ARRL E Letter has an extensive article written about our own Greg Butler KW6GB and his creation of Winlink Wednesday in 2016 to establish good practical Winlink communication in Virginia for emergency communication purposes. This weekly net provides the capability to all hams to establish and practice the use of digital communications (Winlink) for use in emergency communications. This program has grown to have 200 plus check-ins from all over the country. Read this article for much more details. Big congratulations to Greg for his creation of this important weekly digital communications test event.

Hurricane Season – Hurricane season is right around the corner and Univ of Colorado has released their yearly hurricane forecast. Their historical forecast accuracy is usually reasonable good. If this holds true, we all better prepare for the need of amateur radio emergency communications. Their forecast includes 16 Named storms, 80 named storm days; 8 Hurricanes, 35 Hurricane days; 4 Major Hurricanes, 9 Major Hurricane Days.

Probabilities for at least one major (category 3-4-5) Hurricane landfall on each of the following coastal areas: Entire continental US coastline-69% (avg 52%); US East Coast including Peninsula Florida-45% (avg 31%); Gulf Coast from Florida Panhandle westward to Brownsville -44% (30%). Probability for at least one major (cat 3-4-5) Hurricane tracking into Caribbean. 58% (Avg 42%) Now looking at this forecast today and even reviewing expected updated forecast closer to June, we can still expect a much more active Hurricane season. Reading the full report gives all of data to back up this forecast .

<https://weather.com/storms/hurricane/news/2020-04-01-2020-atlantic-hurricane-season-april-outlook>

Red Cross-Amateur Radio operators affiliated with the national Red Cross will conduct a nationwide communications drill on May 30. This drill will simulate the types of message traffic that is typical of a national disaster response, such as a hurricane, or wildfire. Hams will utilize digital modes to move a variety of Red Cross data, with special focus given to methods that do not require infrastructure such as a repeater or the internet. The drill features a local option where ARES organization can work with local Red Cross Chapters to drill local and regional functionality. NOTE-This drill is an outgrowth of the regional



drill we performed some months ago which included ARES groups from Maine to South Carolina which was so successful. World Amateur Radio Day is April 18, 2020 which is the 95th anniversary of the IARU.

Dr Joe Palsa
ARRL Virginia Section Manager.
k3wry@arrl.org
804-350-2665

From Marty Schulman NV3H: What a great idea! Why Not Check This Out?

In the coming months Rol, K3RA, is having some popular amateur radio classes presented at the National Electronics Museum presented via Zoom. The syllabus is attached - contact him if you want an invite.

Amateur Radio Operating Course

Spring 2020

Optional Supplemental Reading:

The ARRL Operating Manual for Radio Amateurs, 11th Edition. This book supports many of these talks, but it is not a specific text for them. Many of our topics are not in the manual, and a few of manual topics are likewise unique to the book. The book is available at Amazon.com both in kindle and print versions.

Course Organizer:

Rol Anders, K3RA roland.anders@comcast.net

Date

Title

Speaker



**Apr 23
K3RA**

**All About Operating, Amateur Radio
Organizations, Ham Radio Awards**

Rol Anders,

**April 30
W3UR**

DXing

Bernie McClenney

Rol Anders, K3RA

QSLing

Nick Yokanovich, K3NY

**May 7
N3IQ**

VHF/UHF Weak Signal Work

Brian Skutt,

**May 14
W3IKE**

Remote Station control over internet

Ike Lawton,

**May 21
KM4MD**

Digital Modes

Alan Zimmerman,

**Imaging Operating
K4DUM**

Mike Birdseye,

**May 28
K2YWE**

Contesting

Dan Zeitlin,

Logging Software

Rol, K3RA

**June 4
W3LPL**

Propagation

Frank Donovan,



June 11	Amateur Satellites	Glenn Long,
KC4KMY K3CXW	Portable (backpacking) operation	Tom Jerardi
	Paul Stoetzer, N8HM	
Jun 18	Disaster, Public Service, EMCOMM, and	Dave Prestel,
W8AJR	Traffic Handling	Andy Protigal,
N3AWP		
June 25	Setting Up an HF Station	Alan Zimmerman, KM4MD
		et. al.

I bet lots of clubs could implement this class on their own. It doesn't have to be exactly what Roland has set up. A club, groups, or individual could design the class to complement the ham radio operators' club, county, district, or for a group of friends. Just set it up with an on-line platform and watch it fly. I have always believed that the "easy" part in ham radio was getting people into the hobby via personal interests but keeping them is the key. Here is a gateway approach to keeping our new hams in the hobby and advancing their "radio art". Try it! And if you want, sign up to take a class or the classes and see what the classes are like!



Sterling Park ARC Starts a 2m NET

Gordon Miller NQ4K reports:

The 2M net last night (Wednesday) went well. We started at 7 and ended at 7:31.

My count was 12 participants including me. A good turnout. (WB2SAI, K2BFY, KN4BHG, KQ4CI, KN4BGW, N3TG, KJ4VTH, K4UW, KN4ZZI, K4SRX, K3SR(?))

It dawned on me that we are bumping into the NVTN which starts at 7:30 on the Bluemont repeater. Not sure if that matters.

I think we had a good sequence for the meeting.

Open the net

Check-ins with comment or story

Short tech talk (5 minutes)

Final comment by all with joke

Close the net.

We will try again next week. Need someone to be able to do the tech talk and if someone want to try net control, please let us know.

Also, we could do a concurrent Zoom meeting for those who cannot get on the air with their 2M rig. Comments welcome.

Editor's Note: Net details at the end of the newsletter.



Virginia QSO Party Results

By

Gordon Miller NQ4K

We have almost completed the initial scoring of the logs from the Virginia QSO Party and have posted the meta data to our web site (https://www.qsl.net/sterling/VA_QSO_Party/2020_VQP/2020_VQP_Main.html).

We have received 612 logs. This is a dramatic increase over last year with 449 logs. Some increase is probably due to our normal growth. Most is probably due to the new State QSO Party challenge and the coronavirus stay-at-home policies. Regardless a big increase.

We owe a lot of thanks to Marty, NV3H, for developing the online log submittal portal. This saved us a lot of effort. Probably half the logs came in through the portal.

We also owe a lot of thanks to Henry, K2BFY, who developed out log scoring program and scored the electronic logs.

Dick, W2YE, picked up the paper logs at the post office and we are in the process of scoring these.

The Manassas Hamfest has been cancelled. We do not know what we will do for the Awards Ceremony. Suggestions include doing it at the Berryville ham fest, doing it online in Zoom, and not having an awards ceremony this year. We have time to work this out.

73, Gordon, NQ4K





Special Events

The Franklin County ARC is sponsoring a great special event that runs from April 15-April 30 is dedicated to Franklin County's memories of their county's history of moonshining. W₄M will operate on the following bands: 10,15,20,40,80,and 160. Because of its popularity, one will ultimately find W₄M on the DX Cluster. For QSL and more information, please check the W₄M QRZ page.

New River Valley ARC Sponsors

“Audie Murphy Special Event”

SPECIAL EVENT: May 30th from 1300Z to 2200Z Audie Murphy, sponsored by the New River Valley (VA) Amateur Radio Club. 3.860, 7.262, and 14.262 MHz, operating from Brush Mountain, VA on the Appalachian Trail near the Audie Murphy Memorial. QSL Danny Wylam, 710 McDaniel Drive, Christianburg VA 24073. dannywylam@gmail.com



Williamsburg Amateur Radio Club Sponsors

“Jamestown Landing Special Event”

SPECIAL EVENT: May 9th from 1400Z to 2000Z. Jamestown Landing Day Event sponsored by the Williamsburg (VA) Area Amateur Radio Club. 7.265 and 14.265 MHz, QSL Manager K4RC, PO Box 1470, Williamsburg VA 23187. www.k4rc.net



NETS

Joe Palsa, K3WRY, Section Manager reports that The Richmond Amateur Telegraphic Society's Health and Welfare Net occurs every evening at 7:00 on the 146.88 repeater, -600, PL Tone 74.4

The Virginia Beach Amateur Radio Club's Health and Welfare Net occurs every evening at 7:30 PM the 146.895 repeater, -600, PL Tone 141.3

Greene County's Health and Welfare Net occurs every evening at 7:00 PM on the 145.470, PL Tone 151.4

Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club- Wednesday, 7:00 PM , 145.310 (-) PL77.

VADXCC- 3.817 mhz, 4:00PM Daily

VADXCC 28.425 mHz 4:30 PM Daily

**What is your club doing? Please let me know and I'll publicize it.
Ham are getting back on the air!**

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