

LARG Radio News – de K4LRG



Loudoun Amateur Radio Group, P.O. Box 1004, Purcellville, VA 20134

Contacts:

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MEETING LOCATION: The March 18, 2006, LARG meeting will be at 8:30 a.m. in the Leesburg Holy Trinity Lutheran Church at 605 West Market Street. The church is located at the intersection of Market Street and Catoctin Circle on the west side of town. It is just east of the bypass. From the Bypass, take the Leesburg exit at the west end of town and the church is on the right just past the stoplight. Please enter through the door on the east side of the building where you will see both steps and a ramp by the door.

March Meeting Plans – This meeting will probably be a short one to give everyone a chance to get ready for the Virginia QSO Party, which starts at 1300 EST Saturday afternoon. John, W4AU, Norm, AI2C, Paul, N4PD, and some of the other “old time VAQP” contesters will be on hand to answer last minute questions, etc. Also, we will hope to have the travel plans for those LARGer’s who will be operating either mobile, portable, or expedition classes during the VA QSO Party.

Contesting News – If you don’t get enough on-the-air contesting time this weekend in the VA QSO Party, check out the SSB version of the CQ WPX contest on CQ Magazine’s website:

<http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com/WPX%20Contest%20Rules0612705.pdf>

where you will find the official rules, etc. This DX-type contest is a lot of fun for several reasons. First, it has several categories that favor newer or antenna-challenged contesters, the “Rookie”, and “Tri-bander and Single Element” categories. Second, the multipliers are unique prefixes, so US amateurs with, for example, KF4, KG4, or KI4 prefixes are considered “rare” compared to K4 or W4 prefixes. See the rules for the definition of prefix. The exchange is just a signal report (nominal 59, usually) and a sequential serial number, starting with 1. The contest lasts for a full 48 hours, starting at 0000Z Friday evening and running until Sunday evening.

Club News – Send me some news! Rigs for sale, etc., etc.

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Ongoing On-the-air Events (local times shown)

Every Sunday 8:00 p.m.	Club Radio Net, 145.310 MHz duplex
Every Tuesday 8:00 p.m.	Club CW Net, 3697 kHz
Every Thursday 8:00 p.m.	Club SSB Net, 3762.5 kHz
Every Weekday Morning & Evening	Club Commuter Net, 147.480 MHz
Third Saturday of every Month 8:30 a.m.	Club Meeting

Loudoun Amateur Radio Group

Minutes for February 18, 2006:

The meeting was called to order at 8:45am by LARG President **Boyd, N5CTI**. There were 30 members present. (Secretary's note: There were more people than this number present. Please be sure to sign in at each meeting.)

The minutes for the January 2006 meeting were read and approved as corrected. There was no treasurer's report as **Gary, NC4S**, was out of town.

Committee Reports

Training: Denny, KF4TJI

New books were obtained for classes which will begin on March 24. More information will be forthcoming. Volunteers are needed for all areas of teaching.

A handout is being produced to cover the various areas of training available, including ideas for obtaining Technician license through a mentors program.

Emergency/Public Service: Tom WB3AKD

A fox hunt is scheduled for April 15, right after the club meeting. New equipment is being configured for balloon but no flights are currently being considered before fall.

ARES:

RE-registration forms were again distributed. Any further changes should be emailed to WB3AKD.

At a February meeting with county Emergency Management, plans were begun for a June exercise for Loudoun County of which we will be a part of this event. The event is scheduled June 14 from 9-3. Tentatively, our activities will include testing WiFi links and shift change procedures... Another meeting is scheduled for March 13 from 7-9 pm.

Tom reminded the club that FEMA training is recommended for all of us to be serious participants in emergency communications. Most courses are taught during the week so he recommends we use the online class opportunities. Special Saturday classes could be scheduled if there is sufficient interest.

Tom also reported on a broadband WiFi application that is being planned. Such a system would allow us to carry the traffic we need to support the work of the county in times of emergency. Also, Roadstar donated 30 broken but not worthless 802.11b ether amps.

RFI Committee: Mark, W3ZI

Mark reported about the two major issues currently going on in section: deliberate radio interference with the Peter I DXpedition, 3Y0X, particularly on 80 meters, and interference on the 147.300 Bluemont repeater.

He also reminded us that the section needs more OO's.

Old Business

Mark, W3ZI, updated the club on LCD projector project we approved at the January meeting. **Gary, NC4S**, expressed interest in helping to select one and others are welcome as well. Nothing has yet been purchased.

Grant, KB3EMT, reported on progress concerning our involvement to provide communications for local schools with the International Space Station.

Grant indicated that Round Hill elementary school has expressed interest such an activity. The application process takes some time as there are thousands of schools applying. The Initial application has been filled out by the principle which we will complete...

Tom, WB3AKD, indicated that LARG is capable of providing the equipment necessary to meet requirements for operation.

Paul, K4MSG, commented that media attention is a primary component for being accepted.

Boyd, N5CTI, re-emphasized his commitment to fix the problems in our constitution and by-laws. A new committee will be appointed soon. The goal will be to gain strong consensus and then get as many members as possible at the meeting, so we will have a quorum from which we can legally make changes..

Henry, K2BFY, announced that the 2 meter CW net discussed at the January meeting will, most likely, take place in conjunction with CW training class beginning in March.

The 2006 Virginia QSO Party is scheduled for March 18, 19. **Norm, AI2C, Paul, N4PD**, along with **Denny and Carol, KF4TJI/TJJ**, presented practical information concerning successful operations for this contest. LARG is again looking to compete aggressively for club honors against our annual rival, the Central Virginia Contest Club. Most of the major points discussed during this portion of the meeting are found at the end of the minutes. A handout of important resources was made available for members.

New Business

Ray, K4AJA, passed away a week ago. A moment of silence was observed in his memory.

Field Day

We need to start our planning very soon for Field Day this coming June 24-26. We still need a volunteer for Field Day Chairman. As last year's Field Day Chairman, Boyd commented that this is not as big a time drain as he thought it would be, since many people step up to help in a variety of areas.

In other business, the club was reminded of the upcoming *Frostfest* and *Winterfest* events and that anyone interested in serving on the Constitution Committee should contact Boyd.

Vice President **Dave Putman, KE4S**, also reported that additional Sunday Night Net Controls needed and they should contact him to volunteer.

The next meeting of the Loudoun Amateur Radio Group is scheduled for March 18.

The meeting adjourned at 10:40am.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy, W4XJ, Secretary

Virginia QSO Party Comment Summary

General Comments: Norm, AI2C:

- Most of the info being presented can be found in the Member's Only Section of the website under "Trade Secrets..."
- Want to have a high number of members participate in QSO party this year.
- Rules have not changed since last year.
- In addition to LARG combined score, each operator should choose a category in which to compete.
- Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club, the sponsoring club for the QSO party, is trying to get everyone to comply to Cabrillo format for log submission.
- Final score is based on QSO's and multipliers, which includes states, CA provinces, DX, plus VA counties and independent cities.
- John Unger's propagation forecast and models can be found on our website.
- 80/40m will normally be the busiest area of activity. Norm suggests we start on 40 and work from there.

General Comments: Paul, N4PD:

- Operate in category and mode where you can make the highest score.
- CVCC (Central Virginia Contest Club) is our big "rival" in this contest. VA QSO Party is our one chance to give them a run for the money.
- Each amateur must operate under your own license and license restrictions. A club station can be established if desired.
- Free logging program and other logging resources are on the SPARC website at www.qsl.net/sterling.
- There are a lot of resources for contest on LARG website in the Members only area.

Techniques: Norm

- Timing is everything. Calls should be fast and short with standard phonetics used.
- Try to spend the first 2-4 hours on 40 meters. Get a feel for your own signal strength. Once you get a "feel" for your coverage area, you can grab an open frequency and call CQ.
- Think about using the "Law of twice" - if the station doesn't answer in two calls, then make a note of location and go on...
- Be sure to remember that you are "Virginia DX."
- Determine ahead of time when you are going to operate and your potential operating plan.
- Think in the next few weeks about a couple of things you could do to increase the efficiency of your station.
- Most operators in the contest will be running phone, some CW and digital operation may also be found.
- Two meter fm operation is normally on 146.58
- Listen for K4NVA - 500 point bonus

Mobile Operation: Denny and Carole, KF4TJI/TJJ

- Mobile operation good for antenna restricted operators.
- Moving to different counties builds multipliers
- Helps club score to contact our operators from different counties
- Going as a couple builds points by having more than one callsign that is operating.
- Be sure to say "mobile" and "the county" in your CQ.
- Program suggested frequencies for operation into your rig.
- Be sure to have a detailed map of the areas.
- Computer logging may not be as easy in mobile operation, print logs may be easier but need to have special areas for county operation. Denny's log sheet will be posted on the web.
- Two meter filter good for metropolitan area.
- Six meter SSB calling freq. - 50.130

Expedition Category Operation: Bill, K4SYH

- Be sure to have a backup radio

- Don't need emergency power, but need to bring your own equipment.