

LARG Radio News – de K4LRG



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

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MEETING LOCATION: The February 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.

February Meeting Plans – We will devote a fair amount of time at the meeting to a discussion of the club's participation as a club entry in the Virginia QSO Party the weekend of March 18. Paul, **N4PD**, and Norm, **AI2C**, will discuss tactics and strategy for fixed operations, and Denny, **KF4TJI**, and Carol, **KF4TJJ**, will talk about mobile operations in the QSO Party. In the meantime, you are urged to visit the member-only section of the LARG website and look at: http://www.k4lrg.org/Secrets/Va_QSO_Party_TS.html. This site is password protected, but any paid-up member can contact one of the club officers for user and password information.

One of the things that makes it a lot easier to log and score your entry in the VAQP is logging software, especially if you plan to make just a handful of contacts. One of the best logging programs and best bargains is the software written by **N3FJP** (see, <http://www.n3fjp.com/>). You can buy his program for the VAQP for only \$6.00, and it is very easy to configure and learn to use. You can download a trial version of the program, which will allow you to log only 30 QSO's, and try it out. A number of club members, including Bill, **WF1L**, have experience with using the program and can help out with any problems. Other logging programs for the VAQP are also available, but we know that this one works well. Make sure that you learn whichever program you decide on before the start of the QSO Party, if you plan to use it!

At the end of the meeting we will have a **mini-hamfest**. Everyone is urged to bring in all their unwanted "treasures" that are sure to be desired by someone else. There are no limits on price, but in the past we've learned that items with price tags of less than about \$10.00 sell best!

Contesting News – For all of you hams looking for new countries to work, the ARRL DX CW and SSB contests will take place during the next month. This weekend the CW version runs from 0000Z on February 18 to 0000Z on February 20; the SSB DX contest is the weekend of March 4/5. This contest is fun for US operators because all the DX can only work US and Canadian stations for points. The exchanges are simple. US/Canadian stations send a signal report and their state or province. DX stations will send a signal report and their approximate transmitter power output.

Club News – We report with great sadness the death of LARG Charter Member, Ray, **K4AJA**. We will miss his cheerful voice on 2 meter FM and the HF bands. One of the highlights of our annual Christmas Dinner this year was the presentation of the LARG Lifetime Achievement Award to Ray by club President, Carol, **KF4TJJ**.

LARG Club Meeting Minutes for January 21, 2006

Our President **Carol, KF4TJJ**, called the meeting to order at 8:45, leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 33 people in attendance.

No visitors or new members were present. **Jim, KG4YQP**, was welcomed back to the area after serving our country.

The November 2005 minutes were accepted as read by **Dave, KE4S**, acting as Secretary for today's meeting. The annual dinner was held in December, so no December meeting was held.

The Treasurer's reports for November and December were accepted as read by **Gary, NC4S**.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

President: Carol, KF4TJJ, noted that **Ray, K4AJA**, has been hospitalized, and is due to return home today. She circulated a card to Ray for signature. Carol also thanked members who helped on committees and participated in club events through the past year.

Training: Denny, KF4TJJ, announced planning for a General license class during the Spring (late February-March), to be conducted Friday evenings at the church in Purcellville. More information as plans develop. **Henry, K2BFY**, is interested in teaching a CW class, possibly in conjunction with the Spring class. He is also talking up a 2-meter CW net, possibly using modulated CW (MCW). Plans for this will be discussed at the February meeting. Another class (General or Amateur Extra) may be planned for the Fall season.

Emergency/Public Service: Tom, WB3AKD, provided a recap of several events over the last months. He also discussed briefly training received on the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the availability of courses on the FEMA web site. During 2005, we significantly improved our coordination with Loudoun County Emergency Management, the ARC, and local hospitals. Tom provided forms for members to (re)register as ARES members.

A March of Dimes Walk-A-Thon is scheduled for 30 April in the Leesburg area – support planning has just begun.

Tom, WB3AKD, also briefly discussed plans to establish a Wi-Fi net on the ham bands within the county. Members interested in participating or helping should contact him.

Randy, W4XJ, provided a brief discussion of Skywarn changes and new courses planned.

Interference: Mark, W3ZI, discussed briefly the BPL trial planned in the Sterling area, and asked members to report if they monitor any problems associated. He also suggested we keep our eyes open to determine if any new BPL nodes are being installed on power lines in the area.

Contesting: John, W4AU, mentioned these upcoming contests:

- The North American QSO Party (SSB), commencing today at 1:00PM local time;
- The ARRL VHF January Sweepstakes, also starting today at 2:00PM local time;
- The Virginia QSO Party will be March 18-19. Club planning will be discussed at the February meeting. LARG has agreed to sponsor a plaque for "High Virginia Digital Single Op" in this event.

Nominating Committee: Paul, N4PD, John, W4AU, and Bill, WF1L, presented nominations for club officers in 2006; additional nominations from the floor were solicited (none received). Officers for 2006 were elected by written ballot: **President – Boyd, N5CTI; Vice-President – Dave, KE4S; Secretary – Randy, W4XJ; and Treasurer – Gary, NC4S**. Congratulations.

Constitution and Bylaws: **Dick, W2YE**, provided a brief description of the process by which a set of draft changes to the LARG Constitution and the Bylaws had been developed. Committee members included **Dick, W2YE, Mark, W3ZI**, and **Randy, W4XJ**. **Mark, W3ZI**, proposed that we limit discussion time on the changes; this was accepted by consensus. Treasurer **Gary, NC4S**, noted the number of club members officially on the roster for 2006 stands at 45. By the present Constitution, an affirmative vote of 30 or more members is required to change the Constitution.

Dick, W2YE, made a motion (seconded) to accept the draft Constitution and Bylaws as written. During the discussion session, **Norm, AI2C**, raised concerns about multiple issues with the draft. He suggested that the proposed dissolution clause be revised to provide scholarship within the Loudoun County area. **Dick, W2YE**, also agreed with Norm's suggestion. Norm felt that we in Loudoun had built this organization with upwards of 5-figures of assets. It's unfair to have our 'remains' go to a regional or national organization when arrangements can be made to establish a small scholarship fund with the Loudoun County School Board for a Loudoun County student pursuing a higher degree in computer science, communications, or electrical engineering. And, further, Norm suggested that the student doesn't need to be a licensed amateur radio operator.

Further, Norm felt that the proposed quorum for regular business meetings was unfair to all who have built this organization. He felt the group is quite valuable with 5-figures of assets; the group has operational missions and responsibilities that all members are to support, and consequently, the proposal says it's not necessary to attend meeting since as few as 3 (2 officers and one other member) can carry on. Further, Norm suggested that the LARG is not a social club, a bridge club or a church group where folks are members for life, pay no dues, and come and go as they please. He felt that it sends the wrong message to our members and he apologized for not recognizing the lack of attendance. He further summarized that instead of the existing one-third requirement that a one-fifth quorum for business would be more fair. He felt certain we could get 20 out of 100 voting members to a meeting. He asked that before we proceed with the 3-person quorum that an *ad hoc* committee be formed to address attendance problems, including: newbie integration, membership oaths and responsibilities, annual membership cards, a published post-meeting program schedule, and other things that would strengthen our members resolve to attend regularly.

When the question was called, the motion to accept the changes was defeated (27-1 in favor) because the required 30 affirmative votes were not attained (some members had departed early). Our new President **Boyd, N5CTI**, will appoint a new committee to address the issues and propose a new draft revision of the Constitution.

New Business:

Outgoing President **Carol, KF4TJJ**, noted (for those of us feeling withdrawal symptoms from hamfests) the following events:

- MMARC, Sunday Jan 29, Odenton, MD,
- FrostFest, Sun Feb 19, Richmond, and
- Winterfest, Sun Feb 26, Annandale.

Gary, NC4S, circulated a caution notice regarding the West Mountain Radio battery cutover device, suggestion that the device should not be used with lead-acid batteries.

John, W4AU, suggested a mini-hamfest to be held after the February meeting. Bring your ?treasures!

Tom, WB3AKD, proposed a fox hunt to be held after the April meeting. Tally ho!

Denny, KF4TJJ, announced 2006 calendar sales today of \$130. Remaining 2005 calendars are free.

Mark, W3ZI, proposed the club should purchase a used LCD projector for \$700. His motion to this effect was approved.

Grant, KB3EMT, discussed the possibility of sponsoring a school/class QSO with the ISS. A specific application process is required; Grant will investigate and report.

Norm, AI2C, reported information on DXpeditions in progress or ready to begin:

- 6O0N Somalia Jan 19th through Feb 1st
- 3V8DLH Tunisia from Jan 24th to 31st 2006
- CE0Z Robinson Crusoe Island (Juan Fernandez) from Jan 20th to 28th
- 3Y0X Peter I from around Feb 6th

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45AM.

Dave Putman, KE4S

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