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February 15, 2024

John E. Ross, KD8IDJ, [Editor](#)

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Senators Roger Wicker and Richard Blumenthal Introduce S.3690 to Eliminate Private Land Use Restrictions on Amateur Radio
On January 30, 2024, US Senators Roger Wicker (MS) and Richard Blumenthal (CT) introduced [S.3690](#), the Senate companion bill to H.R.4006, [introduced last June](#). Both bills reflect the Congressional campaign efforts by [ARRL](#) to eliminate homeowner association land use restrictions that prohibit, restrict, or impair the ability of an Amateur Radio Operator to install and operate amateur station antennas on residential properties they own.

The advertisement is divided into three vertical sections. The top section is black with the Schulman Auction logo (a stylized 'S' in a square) and the text 'Schulman Auction' and 'AMATEUR RADIO EQUIPMENT SPECIALISTS'. The middle section is yellow with the text 'Collections, Estates, Specialty & Premium Gear' and 'BUY/SELL Click here for more information.' The bottom section is blue with the RigExpert logo and the text 'ORANGE ZONE', 'LOW PRICE FREEZE!', 'AA-35/55/230 ZOOM ANTENNA ANALYZERS', and '*FINAL SALE'. There is also a small image of a hand holding a RigExpert antenna analyzer.

Amateur Radio Operators repeatedly are relied upon to provide essential communications when disaster strikes, but their ability to do so is being impaired by the exponential growth of residential private land use restrictions that hinder their ability to establish stations in their homes with which to train and provide emergency communications when called upon.

In announcing the introduction of S.3690, Senator Wicker said: "Because communication during natural disasters is often hindered, we should be making every attempt to give folks more options. Reliable access can make the difference between life and death in an emergency. Our legislation removes roadblocks for amateur radio operators looking to help their friends, families, and neighbors."

In a similar announcement, Senator Blumenthal stated: "Our measure will help clarify the rules so ham radio enthusiasts can successfully continue their communications.

In the face of emergency or crisis, they help provide vital, life-saving information that allow listeners to properly and safely respond, but prohibitive home association rules and confusing approval processes for installing antennas have been an unnecessary impediment. The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act resolves these bottlenecks and ensures that radio operators can function successfully."



US Senators Richard Blumenthal (CT) [left] and Roger Wicker (MS) [right]

ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR, and Director John Robert Stratton, N5AUS, Chair of the ARRL's Government Affairs Committee, both extended on behalf of ARRL, its Members, and the Amateur Radio community their thanks and appreciation for the leadership of Senator Wicker and Senator Blumenthal in their continuing efforts to support and protect the rights of all Amateur Radio Operators.

[Read more on ARRL News](#)

Amateur Radio as Educational Tool Represented to Policymakers in Washington DC

ARRL and Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC) represented Amateur Radio at a symposium in Washington on February 1 at which the top domestic spectrum policymakers from across the federal government considered implementation of the [National Spectrum Strategy](#) (NSS) [PDF].



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ARRL ensures that Amateur Radio is represented at sessions such as this so that decisionmakers understand amateur radio's roles when spectrum decisions are made, including its substantial contributions to student interest and education in STEM subjects at schools throughout the country and its role during emergencies and natural disasters.



Phil Karn, KA9Q, right, represented amateur radio in the National Telecommunications and Information Administration spectrum symposium. [BOC Engineering - YouTube, photo]

In the NSS, released by the White House in November, national policymakers identified some 2,790 megahertz of spectrum to be considered for future commercial needs. No new amateur spectrum was included, with only the ongoing reallocation studies related to 3.1 - 3.45 GHz being addressed.

The NSS was prepared for the President by the National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA) in collaboration with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). NTIA considered input from Federal Executive Branch agencies that use spectrum as well as from other spectrum users, including amateur radio operators. As the NSS was being formulated during 2023, ARRL's Washington Counsel presented information on amateur radio to the policymakers at an NTIA listening session. This was followed with [a written submission about amateur radio spectrum concerns](#), and later with a one-on-one meeting with NTIA's Senior Spectrum Advisor in overall charge of formulating the NSS.

The February symposium followed release of the NSS in November and was in support of finalizing implementation plans for the strategy that are expected to be announced by the White House in mid-March. For the symposium, ARRL Life Member Phil Karn KA9Q, a director and past-president of ARDC, participated as a panelist and reinforced amateur radio's important national role in workforce development with personal testimony based on his own career.

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Karn's recruitment by Qualcomm in its early days was due directly to his pioneering amateur radio accomplishments with digital wireless projects that included many firsts. Karn retired from Qualcomm as Vice President for Technology in 2011. He shared with policymakers the value of amateur radio to interest and recruit youth into STEM areas and into wireless specifically. Karn's life experience lent special weight to his remarks about amateur radio's role in attracting youth to STEM projects.

"I see [amateur radio] - having been involved in it for 52 years now - as fundamental as an educational system... It is a type of hands-on intuitive learning that is almost impossible to get any other way," said Karn. [Watch a video of the panel on YouTube.](#)

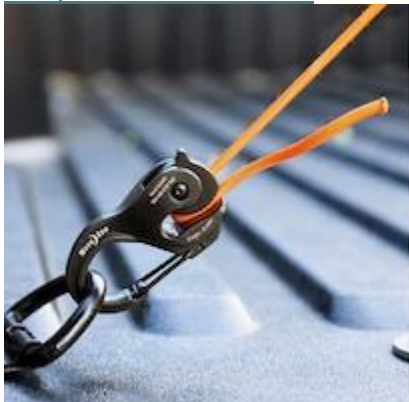


Phil Karn, KA9Q, relayed how amateur radio resulted in his successful professional career. [ARDC, photo]

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Highlights from 2024 Orlando HamCation

Warm weather greeted the crowds of radio amateurs who attended the 2024 Orlando HamCation® from February 9 - 11. The convention hosted the ARRL Florida State Convention, but drew attendees from across the country, and some from even farther, renewing HamCation's place as the second largest US ham radio convention.

[HamCation](#) is sponsored by the Orlando Amateur Radio Club (OARC). The convention was sprawled out across the Central Florida Fairgrounds, including a huge outdoor tailgate and buildings filled with exhibitors and swap tables. The convention enjoys significant participation from amateur radio manufacturers, dealers, clubs, and organizations. In the months leading up to this year's convention, HamCation International Relations Co-Chairs, Lidy Meijers, KJ4LMM, and Peter Meijers, AI4KM, traveled to ham radio conventions across



Europe to cast a spotlight on the convention. Their work paid off, garnering an attendance of amateurs from many other countries, and even attracting other international societies to exhibit, including the Radio Society of Great Britain, and the Deutscher Amateur Radio Club (Germany).

"It was very successful and very busy," said OARC President John Knott, N4JTK. "The vendors reported traffic at their booths was high and both the trunk fest and the flea market were busy." Knott also said that reservations filled 200 RV spaces.

The East-West Hall included a row of booths organized by ARRL.

In addition to supporting renewing members and those who joined ARRL for the first time, attendees also had the opportunity to meet ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR; CEO David Minster, NA2AA, and Southeastern Division Director Mickey Baker, N4MB. Baker also moderated the ARRL membership forum on Saturday afternoon. Together, Baker, Roderick, and Minster covered several key areas of membership interest. Roderick, who asked attendees to consider what they've done for amateur radio lately urged members to find opportunities to support new licensees and strengthen radio clubs.



ARRL CEO David Minster, NA2AA, presented an update on the organization's happenings at the membership forum held at 2024 Orlando HamCation. Among the topics he covered was a new, free ARRL membership offer that will soon be introduced for students 21 and younger.

Minster spoke about a new, free ARRL membership offering for students 21 and younger that will be introduced soon. He also described ways that ARRL is increasing amateur radio's role in education through teachers, students, and schools. "ARRL knows that amateur radio is an effective tool in developing student experiences in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) disciplines," said Minster. "Our efforts to increase our outreach in education and other areas is playing a prominent role with the development of the new ARRL strategic plan."

Also participating at HamCation was ARRL Education and Learning Manager Steve Goodgame, K5ATA. Goodgame presented a forum covering recent efforts and success stories to develop pathways for more teachers and students to use amateur radio in their classrooms. His wife and member-volunteer Cyndi Goodgame, K5CYN, who is also an educator, engaged dozens of young and prospective hams by collecting their experiences and interests for ARRL's ongoing work to increase outreach to students.

A familiar face to many was ARRL National Instructor Gordon West, WB6NOA. In January, ARRL announced that it had become Gordon West's new publisher of his popular license preparation books. "There was a steady stream of visitors that included recent licensees and instructors who enjoyed an eyeball with Gordo," said

Goodgame. HamCation attendees were also drawn to the ARRL booths to meet West. He was introduced as ARRL National Instructor at the membership forum. On Saturday night, HamCation recognized Director Fred Kemmerer, AB1OC, and his wife Anita, AB1QB, awarding them with the [2024 Gordon West Ambassador of the Year Award](#).

The ARRL team also included Great Lakes Division Vice Director Roy Hook, W8REH; Northern Florida Section Manager Scott Roberts, KK4ECR and Section Emergency Coordinator Arc J. Thames, W4CPD; West Central Florida Section Manager Mike Douglas, W4MDD; Collegiate Amateur Radio Program Advisor Andy Milluzzi, KK4LWR; Maxim Society Member Holly Roderick; Honorary Vice President Frank Butler, W4RH; Assistant Member Services Manager Kim McNeill, KM1IPA; Director of Marketing and Innovation Bob Inderbitzen, NQ1R, and many DXCC card checkers, including: N2MFT, K3GO, K4SV, AG4W, KS4WA, KX4TT, K6ND, WA6POZ, W8BLA. ARRL also recognized member-volunteers Sloan Davis, N3UPS, and Tom Gaines, KB5FHK, for their help organizing satellite operating demonstrations.

Visit the [ARRL Facebook page](#) to see a photo album from the convention.

Veteran DXpedition Leader Bob Allphin, K4UEE, SK



ARRL member Chris Brault, KD8YVJ (center), a student at Saint Louis University's School of Science and Engineering, helped represent Youth on the Air (YOTA) at HamCation. He is an active participant in the ARRL Collegiate Amateur Radio Program (CARP). Brault is seen here with ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR (right), and Maxim Society Member Holly Roderick (left).

Prolific DXpedition leader, ARRL Maxim Society member, and former Chair of the ARRL DX Advisory Committee, Robert C. "Bob" Allphin, Jr., K4UEE, has become a Silent Key.

Allphin passed on February 10 at the age of 79. His early life as the son of a United States Air Force (USAF) officer sent him to many corners of the globe. That set the tenor for a life in amateur radio spent operating from far-flung places.

Allphin was first licensed at the age of 14 and graduated high school in Okinawa, Japan. He served a career in the USAF, serving as an instructor in electronic warfare during the Vietnam conflict. After an honorable discharge with the rank of captain, Allphin entered the financial services world, retiring after 28 years to focus on his passion of DXpeditions. Allphin was a natural leader. "Bob was always optimistic and hopeful in DXpedition planning. He encouraged and coaxed his fellow team members to bring out the best in everyone.

If there were disappointments, he turned them into humor and diplomatically mitigated conflicts. He excelled in DXpedition PR and financing," said Ralph Fedor, KOIR, who frequently co-led DXpeditions with Allphin. "Bob was very good at organizing and motivating people to participate," said Dr. Glenn Johnson, W0GJ, who co-led several DXpeditions with Allphin. Allphin always found a way to make the best out of challenging operating conditions. "He was always thinking outside the box. His concern was to put on the 'best show' possible and work the hard-to-reach areas," said Johnson.

In early 2000, Johnson was preparing to travel to a medical assignment in Bhutan, which was #2 on the DXCC Most Wanted List at the time. He had applied to operate while in the country but was initially denied a license. Then, in April, Johnson got a call from the Bhutan Ministry of Information and Communication asking if he can



Bob Allphin, K4UEE, listens carefully to CW calls while operating as K1N from Navassa Island in 2015.



Bob Allphin, K4UEE (left) shakes hands with long time friend Ralph Fedor, KOIR (right) on King George Island in 2006 on the way to Peter I Island for the 3Y0X DXpedition. [Photo courtesy of Ralph Fedor, KOIR]

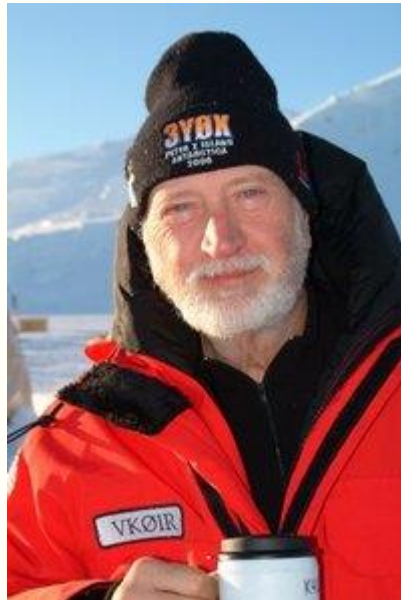
bring a team on the first of May. Immediately, he involved Allphin. "I called Bob, and within 2 weeks we had a team assembled and equipment shipped over. A52A was a very successful DXpedition and still holds records," said Johnson.

Iconic activations were Allphin's specialty. According to [his QRZ page](#), Allphin participated in, led, or co-led numerous DXpeditions including: Baker and Howland islands, Heard Island, Bhutan, South Sandwich Islands, South Georgia Island, Peter I Island, Lakshadweep, Desecheo Island, Saba/Sint Eustatius, Amsterdam Island, and Navassa Island. In all, he participated in 38 contest DXpeditions.

"From the mid-80s through the early 2000s, Bob set five single operator/single band world records and was a competitor in two World Radio Team Championship (WRTC) events in 1996 and 2000. Bob is a member of the CQ DX Hall of Fame, Board of Directors of [The International DX Association] INDEXA, current President of The KP1-5 Project. He is a member of the Voodoo Contest Group, FOC (First Class Operator Club), A-1 Operators Club, [and] the Southeastern DX Club Hall of Fame. He has visited 131 DXCC entities and been QRV from 85," according to his QRZ page.

In addition to planning and leading trips, Allphin also excelled at videography to tell their stories. [A documentary filmed by Allphin about the 2015 K1N Navassa DXpedition](#) is available on YouTube.

Allphin was a dedicated amateur radio mentor who wanted to help others succeed. Craig Thompson, K9CT, was one of many Allphin helped along the way. "As an aspiring DXpeditioner, Bob was so approachable and helpful. We had many common friends, and because of those relationships, it was an honor to be asked to join any of his DXpeditions. At Amsterdam Island, he was my roommate, and I enjoyed his sincere joy of leading our team. He loved 160 and CW but mostly the challenge of doing something really hard, like going where they said he couldn't go. That is why he was on so many top-ten DXpeditions! What an honor to know him," said Thompson.



Beyond his prowess as an operator, Allphin leaves a legacy of kindness among those who knew him well. "He was a gentleman's gentleman, always cordial, friendly, and jovial," said Johnson. Allphin was a generous donor to ARRL through the years, being honored as part of the President Class of the Maxim Society and was a member of the Diamond Club. He was a major gift donor to the 2014 ARRL Second Century Campaign. "Bob leaves amateur radio with a legacy of accomplishments. Above all, he strove to do things well, do things right, and do things fairly," said Fedor.

Information about memorial services, as well as more details about Allphin's many non-radio accomplishments, may be found in [his online](#)

[obituary](#). A [photo memorial has been assembled](#) by photographer Tom Roscoe, K8CX, at www.hamgallery.com.

[Read more about Bob Allphin, K4UEE, on ARRL News](#)



Amateur Radio in the News

ARRL Public Information Officers, Coordinators, and many other member-volunteers help keep amateur radio and ARRL [in the news](#).

["Amateur radio club members are pros at broadcasting"](#) / Patriot News (Pennsylvania) February 10, 2024 -- Perry County Amateur Radio Club.

["FBCS dials in for radio competition"](#) / Bonner County Daily Bee (Idaho) February 13, 2024 -- Bonner County Amateur Radio Club and Amateur Radio Emergency Services® of Bonner County. *The Bonner County Amateur Radio Club is an ARRL Affiliated Club.*

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ARRL Podcasts

On the Air

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The Joys of Being a General

The January/February 2024 issue of *On the Air* featured a story from Brian McSpadden Gardener, KE8JVX, about "The First-Year Experiences of a General-Class Ham," in which Brian detailed how he got his feet wet as a General, and how he put together his first station for HF. Brian joins this episode of the podcast to tell us a little more about his first year as a General, as well as what he's done since then.



ARRL Audio News

Listen to [ARRL Audio News](#), available every Friday. ARRL Audio News is a summary of the week's top news stories in the world of amateur radio and ARRL, along with interviews and other features.

The On the Air podcast and ARRL Audio News are available on blubrry, iTunes, and Apple Podcasts -- [On the Air](#) | [ARRL Audio News](#).





Announcements

The registration deadline for the Ham Radio Science Citizen Investigation (HamSCI) sixth annual workshop is March 1. The workshop will be held March 22 - 23, 2024, at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. The event is meant to bring together the amateur radio community and professional scientists. The 2024 workshop's theme is Alignments, specifically those between the sun, moon, and Earth; collegiate amateur radio recreation and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) curricula; data collection and analysis, and professional and citizen science. Workshop participants will prepare for the solar eclipse taking place on April 8, 2024, which will be seen in totality from Cleveland. For registration and additional information about the event, visit [HamSCI Workshop 2024 | HamSCI](#).

The ARRL Board of Directors met for their Annual Meeting on January 19 -- 20, 2024, in Windsor, Connecticut. The minutes of the meeting are now posted on the ARRL web site. They may be accessed at the following link: www.arrl.org/board-meetings

ARRL Headquarters will be closed on Monday, February 19, 2024, in observance of Presidents Day. There won't be any W1AW bulletin or code practice that day. ARRL HQ will reopen on Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 8 AM EST.

There are several special operating events to mark the holiday. Visit the ARRL [Special Event Stations](#) database to find more on the air commemorations of Washington's birthday.

In Brief...

The [Stillwater Amateur Radio Association's](#) ice station, W0JH, will be in operation during Presidents Day weekend from February 17 - 19, 2024. This is the ninth year for the special event, and according to their webpage, is held to "drive away the remainder of Minnesota winter by generating as much RF as possible over the Presidents Day long weekend." Under the right conditions, the club would operate on a frozen Lake Elmo in Minnesota, but because of the mild winter weather, operations will be held at an onshore site. The station will operate from 10:00 AM (16:00 UTC) to 4:00 PM (22:00 UTC) on 21.360, 14.260, 7.260, and 3.860 MHz. Contact confirmations will be by email only. To request a certificate, send an email with your call sign, the date and time (UTC) of the contact, the band or frequency used, and the mode used to W0JHice@outlook.com.

The Young Ladies Radio League (YLRL) will host a special contest event on February 17 - 18, 2024. The YL (young lady)/OM (old man) Contest is open to all radio amateurs and runs from 00:00 UTC February 17 to 23:59 UTC February 18. Only 10 contacts are needed to be eligible for an award, and the rules are simple: YLs count only OMs and OMs count only YLs, phone and CW contacts are scored as separate contests, and digital contacts (RTTY, FT8) count as CW contacts. A log template can be downloaded from [N1MM Logger+](https://www.n1mm.com/Logger+). More information is available at <https://ylrl.net/contests/>. The Young Ladies Radio League was founded in 1939 by Ethel Smith, K4LMB (SK), who was the group's first president, and the YLRL continues to use her call sign today. She served as the Section Emergency Coordinator for the ARRL Virginia Section from 1966 - 1969 and later as ARRL Assistant Director for four different Roanoke Division Directors. In 1972, she received the ARRL Roanoke Division Service Award. The YLRL will celebrate its 85th year in July 2024.



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The K7RA Solar Update

Tad Cook, K7RA, of Seattle, Washington, reports for this week's ARRL Propagation Bulletin, ARLP007:

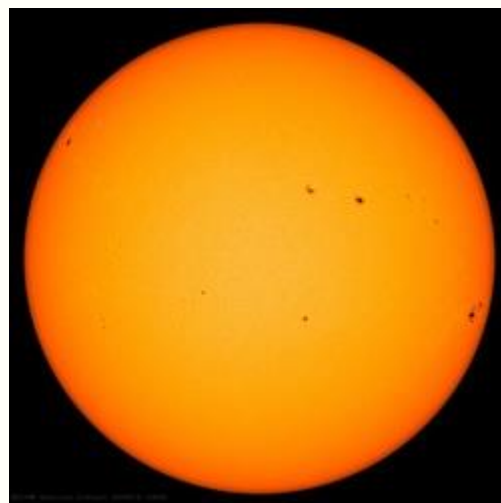
Seven new sunspot groups appeared over the past week: two on February 8, three on February 10, and two more on February 13 and 14.

I don't know why the solar numbers were seemingly out of whack, but the average daily sunspot number declined, as the average daily solar flux rose by a lot.

The average daily sunspot number declined from 142.3 to 134.6, but the average daily solar flux increased from 165.5 to 190.

The average daily planetary A index rose from 5.1 to 7.4, while middle latitude numbers increased from 4.4 to 6.1.

The most active day was February 11, with the planetary A index rising to 15, but that is hardly stormy. This was caused by an unexpected



This solar disk image was taken on February 15, 2024. [Photo courtesy of NASA SDO/HMI]

coronal mass ejection impact at 0211 UTC, according to

Spaceweather.com.

It seems the solar flux is in the midst of a peak the next few days, at 185 and 182 on February 15 - 16, then again at 170 on March 3 - 10.

On February 17 - 23, the forecast sees flux at 175, 172, 170, 165, 175, 165, and 160; 150 on February 24 - 28; 155, 160, and 165 on February 29 through March 2, and 170 on March 3 - 10.

The predicted planetary A index is 10 on February 15, 5 on February 16 - 18, 8 on February 19, 5 on February 20 - 25, 8 and 7 on February 26 - 27, and 5 on February 28 through March 23.

Visit the Solar Chat forum at <https://bit.ly/3SJhbGi> to see images of 3 days of sunspots.

Information on sunspot region 13585 can be found on

SpaceWeatherLive, at <https://bit.ly/3UFVhGQ>

Bob Kulacz, KB1DK, from Trumbull, Connecticut, wrote:

"During the last 2 weeks, activity on 10-meter SSB was bustling, and included many POTA, SOTA, and mobile stations in Europe. In fact, I heard Europeans on 12 meters saying they moved to that band because 10 became so busy. Propagation on 10 has been very good from southern New England, resulting in multiple QSOs with India and New Zealand. QSOs with the Middle East are almost routine now. My occasional fixed mobile operating has been extremely productive and satisfying. I strongly recommend taking advantage of these great conditions on 10 meters while we have them."

Sunspot numbers for February 8 through 14 were 149, 105, 146, 144, 153, 122, and 123, with a mean of 134.6. The 10.7-centimeter flux was 185, 183.4, 193.8, 180.4, 208.3, 194.8, and 184.1, with a mean of 190. Estimated planetary A indices were 5, 6, 5, 15, 4, 10, and 7, with a mean of 7.4. The middle latitude A index was 5, 4, 4, 12, 4, 8, and 6, with a mean of 6.1.

Send your tips, questions, or comments to k7ra@arrl.net.

A comprehensive K7RA Solar Update is posted Fridays on the ARRL website. For more information concerning radio propagation, [visit](#) the ARRL Technical Information Service, [read](#) "What the Numbers Mean....," and [check out](#) the Propagation Page of Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA.

A propagation bulletin [archive](#) is available. For customizable propagation charts, visit the [VOACAP Online for Ham Radio](#) website.

[Share](#) your reports and observations.

A weekly, full report is posted on [ARRL News](#).

Just Ahead in Radiosport

- February 15 - 16 -- Walk for the Bacon QRP Contest (CW)
- February 15 -- NTC QSO Party (CW)
- February 17 - 18 -- [ARRL International DX Contest](#) (CW)
- February 17 - 18 -- YLRL YL-OM Contest (CW, phone, digital)
- February 17 - 18 -- Russian PSK WW Contest (digital)
- February 18 - 19 -- Run for the Bacon QRP Contest (CW)
- February 21 -- AGCW Semi-Automatic Key Evening (CW)
- February 22 -- 5 RSGB 80m Club Championship (CW)

Visit the [ARRL Contest Calendar](#) for more events and information.

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Upcoming Section, State, and Division Conventions

- February 24 | [Central Dakota Amateur Radio Club](#), hosting the ARRL North Dakota State Convention, Bismarck, North Dakota
- February 24 | [HAM-CON](#), hosting the ARRL Vermont State Convention, Colchester, Vermont
- March 1 - 2 | [Greater Houston HamFest](#), hosting the ARRL West Gulf Division Convention, Rosenberg, Texas
- March 8 - 9 | [Acadiana DX Association Hamfest & Swapmeet](#), hosting the ARRL Louisiana State Convention, Rayne, Louisiana
- March 16 | [49th Annual Stuart Hamfest](#), hosting the ARRL Southern Florida Section Convention, Stuart, Florida
- March 16 | [St. Patrick's Day Hamfest](#), hosting the ARRL West Texas Section Convention, Midland, Texas
- April 6 | [Raleigh Hamfest](#), hosting the ARRL Roanoke Division Convention, Raleigh, North Carolina
- April 12 - 13 | [Green Country Hamfest 2024](#), hosting the ARRL Oklahoma State Convention, Claremore, Oklahoma
- April 20 | [Delmarva Amateur Radio and Electronics Expo](#), hosting the ARRL Delaware State Convention, Georgetown, Delaware

Search the [ARRL Hamfest and Convention Database](#) to find events in your area.

Have News for ARRL?

Submissions for the ARRL Letter and ARRL News can be sent to news@arrl.org. -- John E. Ross, KD8IDJ, ARRL News [Editor](#)

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- Listen to [ARRL Audio News](#), available every Friday.
- *The ARRL Letter* is available in an accessible format, posted weekly to the [Blind-hams Groups.io](#) email group. The group is dedicated to discussions about amateur radio as it concerns blind hams, plus related topics including ham radio use of adaptive technology.
- [NCJ -- National Contest Journal](#). Published bimonthly, features articles by top contesters, letters, hints, statistics, scores, NA Sprint, and QSO parties.
- [QEX -- A Forum for Communications Experimenters](#). Published bimonthly, features technical articles, construction projects, columns, and other items of interest to radio amateurs and communications professionals.

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