

If you are having trouble reading this message, you can see the original at:
<http://www.arrl.org/arrlletter/?issue=2024-03-07>



March 7, 2024

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

[ARRL Home Page](#)

[ARRL Letter Archive](#)

[Audio News](#)



- [Bob Heil, K9EID, Silent Key](#)
- [FCC Job Opportunity for Recent Engineering Graduates](#)
- [Solar Eclipse One Month Away](#)
- [Bob Vallio, W6RGG, Named ARRL Honorary Vice President](#)
- [Amateur Radio in the News](#)
- [ARRL Podcasts](#)
- [Announcements](#)
- [In Brief...](#)
- [The K7RA Solar Update](#)
- [Just Ahead in Radiosport](#)
- [Upcoming Section, State, and Division Conventions](#)

Bob Heil, K9EID, Silent Key

The man who defined the sound of live rock 'n' roll music and brought audio engineering principals into mainstream amateur radio use, Dr. Bob Heil, K9EID, has passed away at the age of 83.

He was an ARRL Life Member and in the ARRL Maxim Society. A Facebook post from Heil Ham Radio paid tribute to their founder: "Bob fought a valiant, yearlong battle with cancer, and passed peacefully surrounded by his family."

Heil founded Heil Sound in 1966, through which he created the template for modern concert sound systems for musicians like the Grateful Dead, The Who, Joe Walsh, and Peter Frampton.



Bob Heil, K9EID.

The advertisement for Schulman Auction, established in 2008, features a red and white logo. It lists "AMATEUR RADIO EQUIPMENT SPECIALISTS" and highlights "SR-2000 HURRICANE, ALPHA 9500, TRANSCEIVERS & MORE". It notes the auction is online through 3/14 and is staffed by hams for hams. Below this, the "RigExpert ORANGE ZONE" logo is shown with images of antennas. The bottom section features a blue background with the text "LOW PRICE FREEZE!" and "AA-35/55/230 ZOOM ANTENNA ANALYZERS *FINAL SALE".

The talk box used on iconic live record *Frampton Comes Alive!* was Heil's design. His audio engineering products have been featured in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, and he was honored in 2007 with the Parnelli Audio Innovator Award for his impact on the live sound industry. "My life has been about achieving great sound, whether on the concert stage or in the amateur radio world," Bob Heil [recounted in 2022](#). "I've watched Heil Sound go from a regional sound company to a world-class microphone manufacturer. This company has been my passion," he said.



"RIP, man. I love you and miss you already. Sending love to Sarah and to the world of audioheads you leave behind," said rocker Joe Walsh, WB6ACU, in [a Facebook post](#). [Joe Walsh, WB6ACU, photo]

Parallel to his commercial and artistic success in live music, was his passion for amateur radio. He was active in ham radio from a young age, and he merged his expertise in audio engineering with his love for radio. Heil Ham Radio was founded to produce microphones, headsets, and other gear for radio amateurs with an emphasis on high-quality audio. Heil was known as a mentor who enjoyed helping others find success in ham radio.

Recently, his grandson Charlie Hartley, KF0OOP, became a licensed ham to surprise Heil for his birthday. [The pair attended the ARRL Midwest Convention/Winterfest](#) in St. Louis, Missouri, on January 27, 2024. Heil was a generous donor to amateur radio organizations, including ARRL. Recently, [he donated a host of new audio gear](#) to the Hiram Percy Maxim Memorial Station, W1AW.



Heil with his grandson, Charlie Hartley, KF0OOP, at the ARRL Midwest Convention/Winterfest.

His generosity and kind nature will be missed by many, including ARRL Director of Development Kevin Beal, K8EAL. "Bob was a titan in many areas. He was generous with his time, offered keen insights, and had the heart of a philanthropist in the ARRL Maxim Society," Beal said. "He was a gentleman to his core, making friends easily and everywhere he went, from rock stars to captains of industry. I consider it a real privilege to have become a friend to him, too, all because of amateur radio."

Heil was known for his passion for AM operations. He served for many years as an on-camera host of the Ham Nation podcast. Tributes to Heil have been flooding social media, including from his co-hosts.

ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR, said Heil's passing is a significant loss. "Bob Heil's technical achievements that brought high-quality audio to amateur radio pale in comparison to his generosity and willingness to help his fellow ham. He's long been known as someone eager to help mentor

PreppComm
Amateur Radio

Real preppers
use PreppComm™

Emergency Comm
That Works™

RIGOL

INTRODUCING
DHO800/900 Series Oscilloscopes

With More
Portability Than Ever!

12 Bit Resolution with Flexibility to Use
for On-site Testing

- 70-250 MHz Bandwidth
- 2-4 Channels
- Up to 50 Mpts Memory
- 1.25 Gsa/sec Sampling
- Compact Size

Starting @ \$299

and teach. His legacy on our hobby will be long-lasting. Our thoughts are with his loved ones."

An obituary for Heil may be viewed [at this link](#).



Bob Heil, K9EID, 1940 - 2024. [Heil Ham Radio, photo]

FCC Job Opportunity for Recent Engineering Graduates

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has a job opening that might be a good opportunity for recently graduated amateur radio operators who have knowledge of the spectrum and RF.

This is a Recent Graduates position in the FCC's Pathways Program, and it will be located in the FCC Office of Engineering and Technology (OET) in Washington, DC. Applications are being accepted for engineering graduates who earned their degree in 2022 or later. For veteran applicants, earlier graduates qualify based upon their military service, including students expecting to graduate in May 2024.

There will be on-the-job training for the position. Some of the duties range from performing propagation analysis of terrestrial, satellite, and/or airborne systems, to evaluating the emission characteristics of various transmitters to validate coexistence with neighboring systems. Projects may involve various computer software engineering and scientific applications. Applications are being accepted through July 2, 2024, and a complete job description and required qualifications can be found at <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/767902700>.



MFJ
www.mfjenterprises.com
The Original
SWR Analyzers
Nothing better!

AMERITRON
Solid State ALS-1306
1200Watts Output
Automatic Bandswitching

Cushcraft
MA-6B
6-Band Beam
20/17/15/12
10/6 Meters
Small
Footprint
BIG SIGNAL!!!
Boom is 7.3 feet
Longest element is 17.2 feet
\$1224.95

XIEGU G106
Multi-mode
SDR HF Radio
Ideal Portable Operation Choice



Solar Eclipse One Month Away

A total solar eclipse that will be seen across North America will occur on Monday, April 8th. It will be the last of its kind in the US for the next 20 years.

Hams across North America are asked to participate in a study about how the ionosphere functions by getting on the air to help scientists in a series of ionospheric experiments. Ham Radio Science Citizen Investigation (HamSCI) has presentations for hams interested in participating on Wednesday, March 27 at 8:00 PM (Eastern) - 5:00 PM (Pacific)*, and that same day at 10:00 PM (Eastern) - 7:00 PM (Pacific)*. Both 30-minute



The 2017 Great American Eclipse. [Sierra Harrop, W5DX, photo.]

presentations will held on Zoom and they will feature HamSCI's Festivals of Eclipse Ionospheric Science (FoEIS). The presenters will take your questions during the presentations.

Here is the [link to the presentations](#).

The program will start by covering HamSCI's basis and purpose, and quickly move into why they are conducting experiments, how hams and shortwave listeners (SWLS) can participate, and what they hope to learn from the event. Along the way, they will discuss why the science behind the event is important to users of the high-frequency radio spectrum - including amateur radio operators!

Learn about the HamSCI's eclipse-focused operating events:

- [Solar Eclipse QSO Party \(SEQP\)](#)
- [Gladstone Signal Spotting Challenge \(GSSC\)](#)
- [Medium Wave Recording Event](#)
- [Time Delay of Arrival \(TDOA\) Event](#)
- [Grape 1 Doppler Receiver Project](#)

Maritime Mobile Planned

During the solar eclipse, John Landrigan, KA4RXP, will be operating in the SEQP as a maritime mobile off the coast of Mazatlán, Mexico, at the beginning of the total solar eclipse as it transits the Maritime provinces of Canada. Look for KA4RXP/MM around 14.265 MHz.

Bob Vallio, W6RGG, Named ARRL Honorary Vice President
 Robert B. "Bob" Vallio, W6RGG, has been honored by the ARRL Board of Directors as an Honorary Vice President.

FT8 + FlexRadio™
A match made in digital heaven.



*Want easy FT8?
 Click to learn more.*

In a motion that passed with an extended standing ovation, the Board awarded the honor at their Annual Meeting in January 2024. The motion honored Vallio's lifetime of service to ARRL and amateur radio. He was first licensed as a Novice with the call sign WN6RGG in July 1952, and he later upgraded to General class as W6RGG in 1953. He has held an Amateur Extra-class license since its inception in 1968.



Bob Vallio, W6RGG.

His tenure of service to ARRL started 46 years ago. He served as Communications Manager of the ARRL East Bay Section from 1978 to 1983, Section Manager of the East Bay Section from 1984 to 1999, Vice Director of the Pacific Division from 2000 to 2003, Director of the Pacific Division from 2003 to 2017, and Second Vice President of ARRL from 2018 to 2023.

The motion continued, in part:

Robert B. Vallio has also served diligently as a member of the Executive Committee numerous times, a member of the Programs and Services Committee, a member of the Administration & Finance Committee, and many more.

Vallio has been active in a number of high-profile DXpeditions, and he is an active contester.

Survive and Escape Oonie Island™
Do you have what it takes?

**STORY-DRIVEN
ELECTRONICS KIT**

ALL AGES 12+ LEARN TO CODE NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

CLICK HERE & SAVE OVER 70% OFF ON YOUR ADVENTURE!



Amateur Radio in the News

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

"["HAMFEST" IN CAVE CITY MAKES WAVES THROUGH THE COMMUNITY](#)" / WCLU (Kentucky) March 2, 2024 -- Mammoth Cave Amateur Radio Club.

"[America's Last Morse Code Station](#)" / *The Atlantic* March 2, 2024

"[Amateurs of Action - The Women of Radio](#)" / *Domestic Preparedness* March 6, 2024 -- Desiree Baccus, N3DEZ, is a member of the ARRL Public Relations Committee

[Share](#) any amateur radio media hits you spot with us.

ARRL Podcasts

On the Air

Sponsored by [Icom](#)

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](#).



The ARRL Antenna Book 25th Edition

The ultimate reference for antennas, transmission lines, and propagation.

ORDER NOW!

NEW!

THE ARRL ANTENNA BOOK

ANTENNA BOOK

The advertisement shows two copies of the book, one standing upright and one lying flat. A 'NEW!' badge is in the top right corner. The ARRL logo is in the top left corner.

Announcements

Pi Day is on the menu for amateur radio on March 14, 2024. Pi Day, 3/14, is a day when mathematicians, scientists, and math lovers around the world celebrate the mathematical sign pi, which is a never-ending number. The [David Sarnoff Radio Club](#) (DSRC) will operate special event station N3P on March 14 from 0000Z to 2359Z, in conjunction with Princeton University's Pi Day celebration and the Einstein Birthday Party held in Princeton, New Jersey. Albert Einstein was born on March 14, 1879. When contacting N3P, make sure to say, "happy Pi Day" and include the state, province, country, and/or grid square from which you are celebrating. The operating frequencies will be 14.031, 14.314, 7.031, and 7.227 MHz. If propagation allows, contacts can also be made 10 and 80 meters. DSRC's local repeater will also be operative on 146.46 +1 MHz, PL 131.8, and 443.4 MHz. Look for N3P on standard FT8 and FT4 frequencies. There may be additional activity on PSK31 around 7070+ and 14070+, or even RTTY. For more information, see [DSRC's special event page](#).

In Brief...

On February 27, 2024, five amateur radio clubs in the Dominican Republic activated special event station HI180RD to celebrate the 180th anniversary of the country's independence from Haiti. Until

2359 UTC on April 30, more than 25 HI180RD amateur radio operators will be on the air daily. Activations are on all HF bands, SSB, and digital modes on 14.326 +/- 20 KHz, 21.325 +/- 20 KHz, 24.980 +/- 20 KHz, and 28.380 +/- 20 KHz, including VHF/UHF frequencies for local stations. QSL certificates are available via QRZ.com. For additional information, contact Mejico Angeles-Lithgow, HI8MA/KQ4IPX, at angeles.m@claro.net.do. The announcement of the Dominican Republic's separation from Haiti took place at the Gate of Mercy in Santo Domingo on February 27, 1844, which is also where the country's tricolor flag was hoisted for the first time.

The National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (NCVEC) Question Pool Committee (QPC) has removed one General-class license question. The QPC of the NCVEC has deleted question G1E09 from the General-class pool because they have determined the question is defective and must be withdrawn. They discovered that, as worded, the question is showing the wrong correct answer. Question G1E09 must be withdrawn from the pool effective immediately and should be removed from examinations as soon as possible. Updated question pool files, including the errata and new information, have been posted on the NCVEC General-class question pool web page at <https://www.ncvec.org/index.php/2023-2027-general-question-pool-release>. The current Element 3 General question pool became effective on July 1, 2023, and it is valid through June 30, 2027. The ARRL VEC advises the community to regularly check the NCVEC website at <http://www.ncvec.org/> for updates to the question pools, which may include errata and withdrawn questions.



The K7RA Solar Update

Tad Cook, K7RA, of Seattle, Washington, reports for this week's ARRL Propagation Bulletin, ARLP0010:

New sunspot groups emerged every day over the past reporting week of February 29 through March 6.

One new sunspot group appeared every day on February 29 through March 3, two new groups appeared on March 4, and another appeared on March 5.

It seems odd, but the average daily sunspot number was about the same (changing from 106.4 to 106.7), while the average daily solar flux had a substantial drop from 175 to 147.4.

Average daily planetary A index was up from 8.4 to 10, while middle latitude numbers rose from 7.4 to 8.

The March 3 planetary A index was 29. [Spaceweather.com](https://www.spaceweather.com) reported a G2 geomagnetic storm at 0930 UTC. On March 7, they reported that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) expects a minor storm on March 9.

The solar flux forecast predicts a short-term peak at 180 on March 21 - 23, and another on April 17 - 19.

Predicted solar flux is 135 on March 7; 140 on March 8 - 9; 145 on March 10 - 12; 140 and 160 on March 13 - 14; 170 on March 15 - 16; 165, 160, 170, and 175 on March 17 - 20; 180 on March 21 - 23; 175 on March 24 - 25; 170 on March 26 - 27; 160 on March 28 - 29; 165 and 145 on March 30 - 31, and 140 on April 1 - 2.

Predicted planetary A index is 5 on March 7; 8 on March 8 - 10; 5 on March 11 - 23; 15, 12, 12, 5, 10, and 8 on March 24 - 29, and 5 on March 30 through April 5.

Sunspot numbers for February 29 through March 6, 2024, were 107, 120, 91, 90, 113, 121, and 105, with a mean of 106.7. The 10.7-centimeter flux was 164.1, 152.8, 152.3, 145.5, 139.9, 141.5, and 136, with a mean of 147.4. Estimated planetary A indices were 4, 9, 5, 29, 10, 7, and 6, with a mean of 10. Middle latitude A index was 4, 9, 3, 20, 8, 7, and 5, with a mean of 8.

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](#).



This solar disk image was taken on March 7, 2024. [Photo courtesy of NASA SDO/HMI]

Just Ahead in Radiosport

- March 9 -- YB DX RTTY Contest (digital)
- March 9 - 10 -- SARL VHF/UHF FM Contest (phone)
- March 9 - 10 -- SARL Field Day Contest (CW, phone, digital)
- March 9 - 10 -- RSGB Commonwealth (BERU) Contest (CW)

- March 9 - 10 -- DIG QSO Party, SSB (phone)
- March 9 - 10 -- EA PSK63 Contest (PSK63)
- March 9 - 10 -- South America 10m Contest (CW, phone)
- March 9 -- AGCW QRP Contest (CW)
- March 9 - 10 -- Stew Perry Topband Challenge (CW)
- March 9 - 10 -- Oklahoma QSO Party (CW, phone, digital)
- March 9 - 10 -- Tesla Memorial HF CW Contest (CW)
- March 9 - 10 -- Idaho QSO Party (CW, phone, digital)
- March 10 -- [North American Sprint](#), RTTY (digital)
- March 10 -- UBA Spring Contest, 2m (CW, phone)
- March 10 -- FIRAC HF Contest (CW)
- March 10 - 11 -- All Wisconsin QSO Party (CW, phone, digital)
- March 11 -- 4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint (CW)
- March 13 -- RSGB 80m Club Championship (CW)
- March 13 - 17 -- AWA John Rollins Memorial DX Contest (CW)

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

DUAL BAND, WIDE BAND, HIGH GAIN, VHF/UHF MOBILE ANTENNA

CA-2X4SR

**DESIGNED FOR SEARCH
& RESCUE APPS!**



www.cometantenna.com

Upcoming Section, State, and Division Conventions

- 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
- May 11 | [ARRL Nebraska State Convention](#), Lincoln, Nebraska
- May 17 - 19 | [Dayton Hamvention](#), hosting the ARRL National Convention, Xenia, Ohio

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](#)

ARRL -- Your One-Stop Resource for Amateur Radio News and Information

- [Join ARRL or Renew Today!](#) No other organization works harder to promote and protect amateur radio. Membership supports benefits, services, programs, and advocacy to help you get (and stay) active and on the air. Membership includes access to digital editions of all four ARRL [magazines](#): *QST*, *On the Air*, *QEX*, and *NCJ*.
- 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.

Free of charge to ARRL members...

- [Subscribe](#) to the *ARES Letter* (monthly public service and emergency communications news), the *ARRL Contest Update* (biweekly contest newsletter), Division and Section news alerts, and much more!
- Find ARRL on [Facebook!](#) Follow us on [Threads](#), [X](#), and [Instagram](#)



The ARRL Letter is published Thursdays, 51 times each year. ARRL members may subscribe at no cost or unsubscribe by editing their Member Data Page at www.arrl.org/opt-in-out.

Copyright © 2024 American Radio Relay League, Incorporated. Use and distribution of this publication, or any portion thereof, is permitted for non-commercial or educational purposes, with attribution. All other purposes require written permission.

ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio®
225 Main Street, Newington CT, 06111-1400 USA
860-594-0200

www.arrl.org