



RCA Amateur Radio Club

Indianapolis, IN

ARRL Affiliated Club

www.w9rca.org

JANUARY 2026

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE RCA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB WILL BE TUESDAY, JANUARY 13,
6:30 PM AT NORTH SIDE EVENTS, FORMERLY THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS,
2100 EAST 71st, INDIANAPOLIS, IN

RCA ARC NEWS

DECEMBER MEETING SUMMARY – Thanks to all those who attended the December meeting. From the ARRL: The FCC is nearly caught up with the license applications which were submitted during the government shut down. Club insurance has been paid for another year. Jim, K9RU and Dick, W9ZB commented on the upcoming VHF contest. Always a challenge! Our Club is probably “good” for the '26 Field Day, but no details have been decided upon yet. Antennas were discussed, concentrating on what type might be recommended for a new ham. Everyone has a favorite!

AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE TEST SESSION

Date: January 10, 2026
Time: Starting at Noon **by appointment only.**
Location: Salvation Army EDS Training Facility, 4020 Georgetown Rd
Indianapolis, IN 46254-2407
Contact: **James Kajder (505) 228-3704**
Email: testing@indyradioclub.org
Required: FCC FRN and a completed NCVEC 605 license application form.
Laurel VEC test sessions: <https://www.laurelvec.com/?pg=exams>

HAMFESTS, OPERATING EVENTS, VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Salvation Army Open Net, Thurs. 7PM, W9RCA repeater, 146.88 MHz, tone 88.5 Hz

Jan 17 -19	ARRL VHF Contest, http://www.arrl.org/january-vhf
Jan 23-25	CQ 160M Contest CW
Jan 24-25	Winter Field Day
Feb 7	Hendricks County Hamfest, Danville, IN http://n9hc.org/
Feb 9-13	ARRL School Club Roundup
Feb 21-22	DX Contest CW
Mar 7-8	DX Contest SSB

WA7BNM expanded contest calendar, <https://www.contestcalendar.com/>

Visit the **ARRL Special Event Stations database** at www.arrl.org/special-event-station to find other on-the-air events and commemorations.

Hamfest or Convention: www.arrl.org/hamfests

Find a license exam in your area: www.arrl.org/exam
ARRL Home: www.arrl.org

ARRL AWARDS COLVIN GRANT TO BOUVET DXPEDITION

The National Association for Amateur Radio® has awarded a \$5,000 Colvin Award grant to the Delta-Xray Group, organizers of the upcoming [3YØK DXpedition to Bouvet Island](#), scheduled for February and March, 2026. Bouvet is a remote island in the Southern Ocean, populated only by seals and penguins, and known for treacherous weather and surf conditions. It is a territory of Norway and nearly all of it [ARRL](#) is covered by glaciers. The most recent amateur radio operation from Bouvet was the 3YØJ DXpedition in 2023, which moved the island from #2 on the Club Log most wanted list to #10.

Two camps are planned, according to team leaders, operating all HF bands, with one camp focusing on high band propagation to North America when conditions allow. Each camp will consist of three tents serving as operating, sleeping, and communal spaces. These tents have previously been used on Bouvet Island and team leaders say they have proven capable of withstanding the extreme conditions expected.

Plans call for the team to leave for Bouvet from Cape Town, South Africa, on February 1. Weather permitting, 3YØK plans to use helicopter airlifts to transport personnel and equipment between the vessel and the island. The group expects to spend three weeks on and around the island and will attempt to contact as many other ham radio operators around the world as they can, using up to 8 stations operating on CW, SSB, FT8, RTTY and the QO-100 geostationary satellite.

The 3YØK DXpedition is perhaps the most expensive ham radio expedition ever mounted, with a budget of \$1.7 million, most of which (\$1.2 million) is for what the team refers to as a “reliable commercial Arctic / Antarctic vessel,” noting that “(s)afe and reliable ship transportation continues to be a challenge for such remote island expeditions, and the cost continues to rise.” Team leaders note that “the foremost priority of the 3YØK expedition is the safety of the operating team, support personnel, and the vessel and helicopter crews.”

The team consists of 24 operators from 14 countries. Two of the team members are young hams, 21-year-old Max Freedman, N4ML, an ARRL staff member; and 26-year-old Alex Schengber, DL2ALY, an aviation engineer currently working at a German research station in Antarctica.

The Colvin Award is funded by an endowment established by the legendary DX couple Lloyd Colvin, W6KG (SK), and Iris Colvin, W6QL (SK), both now deceased. The award is intended to support amateur radio projects that promote international goodwill in the field of DX.

Other major financial support for the DXpedition has come from the Northern California DX Foundation, the International DX Association, and the German DX Foundation.

The complete 3YØK log will be uploaded to ARRL’s [Logbook of The World](#)® — LoTW® — within 12 months following the DXpedition. LoTW is used by radio amateurs to track their progress toward awards including ARRL’s [DXCC Award](#) — the DX Century Club Award — which is achieved by confirming on the air contacts with 100 geographic entities.

“We extend our sincere thanks to all equipment sponsors and financial supporters, and particularly the ARRL Colvin Award grant. Without this collective support, activating Bouvet Island and delivering an ATNO (All-Time New One) from the #10 Club Log DXCC most wanted entity would not be possible.” The team continues to seek financial support from the amateur radio community.

For more information, [visit 3y0k.com](http://visit3y0k.com).

2026 IS ARRL'S YEAR OF THE CLUB -- A CELEBRATION OF AMATEUR RADIO CLUBS

The ARRL is launching a year-long celebration that puts the spotlight squarely where it belongs — on radio clubs. Beginning January 1, 2026, ARRL officially recognizes the [Year of the Club](#), an initiative designated by the ARRL Board of Directors to honor the vital role clubs play in sustaining, growing, and energizing amateur radio.

Radio clubs are the backbone of ARRL and of the Amateur Radio Service itself. For countless hams, a club is the first welcoming doorway into the hobby — a place to learn, to operate, to build, and to belong. Clubs create opportunities for mentoring, public service, technical exploration, and lifelong friendships. Simply put, when clubs thrive, amateur radio thrives.

Throughout 2026, all ARRL Affiliated Clubs are invited to participate in special programs, operating events, and recognition opportunities designed to celebrate club accomplishments and inspire new ideas. ARRL will be rolling out initiatives focused on supporting club growth, strengthening activities, and recognizing clubs that help expand ARRL membership or reach significant milestones, including 100 years of ARRL Affiliation.

New Ways to Celebrate and Compete

Two exciting contests are already under way to kick off the Year of the Club, highlighting how clubs connect with members and the broader community. Details for entering the [ARRL Club Newsletter Contest](#) and [ARRL Club Website Contest](#) are available now, with a shared submission deadline of **January 30, 2026, at 4 PM Eastern Time**.

The [ARRL Club Newsletter Contest](#) recognizes that newsletters are often the heartbeat of a club — sharing news, and keeping members connected and involved.

Does your radio club have a great website that supports club members but also attracts attention for your club? Consider entering the [ARRL Club Website Contest](#). Club websites play an increasingly important role in outreach, public service visibility, and attracting new members to amateur radio.

Winners will be notified in May 2026, honored at the ARRL National Convention being hosted by the [Huntsville Hamfest](#) in August, and featured in *QST*.

A New Home for Clubs Online

In preparation for the Year of the Club, ARRL has launched a [new Clubs website](#), offering a modernized, accessible hub for Affiliated Clubs, prospective clubs, and individual hams looking to get involved with a club. The site brings together information about club benefits, locations, resources, and ARRL Affiliation — all in one place.

A standout new feature is the Club Map search tool, which lets users locate radio clubs by ZIP code and displays both an interactive map and a list of nearby clubs. Try it at [clubs.arrl.org/map](#).

A new, streamlined, [online application](#) also simplifies the process for becoming a new ARRL Affiliated Club. And all clubs can use the new [Member Verification](#) tool as they set a club goal to increase ARRL membership among club members. The result is faster service, easier updates, and better support for the Affiliated Clubs. Everyone is encouraged to explore the new site and pages at [clubs.arrl.org](#) and [affiliatedclubs.arrl.org](#).

Be Radio Active in 2026

The message for 2026 is clear: Celebrate what your radio club already does well, try something new, and be radio active. Whether your club is small or large, new or nearing a century as an ARRL Affiliated Club, the Year of the Club is an invitation to connect, innovate, and share your story.

ARRL'S SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL AMERICA250 WORKED ALL STATES AWARD

As announced in the January 2026 issue of *QST* (see announcement link above), ARRL is celebrating a year-long Worked-All-States operating event celebrating America's 250th Anniversary.

This is in conjunction with ARRL's [**2026 Year of The Club**](#) celebration (be sure to check out all of the club oriented activities planned in 2026!).

In similar fashion to the 2014 ARRL Centennial Celebration, and the 2018 International Grid Chase, and 2023 Volunteer's On The Air events, this event will be exclusively driven only by QSOs uploaded to Logbook of The World (LoTW).

Highlights of the event include:

- Work State toward achieving your America250 WAS by contacting W1AW/Portable Stations:** There will be week-long activations of portable W1AW/portable stations in all 50 states, and in several US Possessions/Territories, that will generate on-air activity to achieve this unique WAS Award. For this operating event, ARRL will provide a listing of all W1AW/portable stations, who will each operate for 7 days (from a Wednesday through the following Tuesday) for 2 separate weeks in the year (an early week between January and July, and a late week between July and December). A few weeks will be listed as non-W1AW/portable weeks due to contests and ARRL Field Day.

There will be three (3) specialty Endorsements, including:

- [Earn WAS by contacting W1AW/portable stations in all 50 states](#) (applying for this endorsement will become possible sometime into July or thereafter when the first wave of 50-state activations is completed and the second wave of state activations is underway).
- [Earn WAS by contacting ARRL Affiliated Club stations in all 50 states](#) (see our [Club Search web page](#) to determine the locations and call signs of ARRL Affiliated Clubs).
- [Earn WAS Triple Play by contacting all 50 states on all three modes](#) (CW/Phone/Digital)

Objective

While the object of the America250 WAS event is to make as many contacts with W1AW/portable stations as possible, on as many bands and modes as possible (except 60 Meters), all operators are encouraged to explain celebrating America's 250th anniversary with the ARRL **America250 WAS Award** to the degree that your operating time allows.

Bands

Activity is encouraged on all US FCC authorized bands (including WARC bands) from 2200 meters LF through all of HF, through all of VHF/UHF/SHF, and up through all of the microwave bands including via light (but excluding 60 Meters) via peer-to-peer (eg, FM simplex) RF contacts (contacts made through Linking Systems or Repeaters will not count).

QSLs

There are no planned QSL cards for any of the W1AW/portable **America250 WAS** operating event stations during this event. All W1AW/portable contacts will be confirmed via LoTW. Stations who contact **W1AW at ARRL HQ** can upload such contacts to LoTW and/or send QSL cards (with SASE) to W1AW, ARRL HQ, 225 Main St., Newington, CT 06111 — **for contacts only made directly with the W1AW Hiram Percy Maxim Memorial Station.America250 WAS Applications**

Applications for the America250 WAS Award must be made via LoTW once a minimum of 50 state QSO confirmations appear in LoTW for contacts made in 2026. To apply within LoTW, look at your usual LoTW WAS page summaries, which will show your progress toward the America250 Award, then [when applying in LoTW](#), the usual WAS Award processing fees will be displayed for the America250 certificate (with endorsements where earned) and shipping.

After the initial America250 Award certificates are issued, endorsements can be sought. These will be supplied as America250 endorsement stickers (in a fashion similar to as shown in the certificate illustration above) that you can affix to your America250 Award certificate.

Contact awards@arrl.org with any questions.

Revisit this page regularly for updates!

UP TO \$25,000 AT STAKE IN NEW ARRL STUDENT CODING COMPETITION

Pre-registration is now open for a [Student Coding Competition](#), a new national challenge sponsored by ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio®. The project is designed to engage young radio amateurs in shaping the future of amateur radio through software development. Open to ARRL-member amateur radio operators aged 21 and younger, the competition will invite students to design a mobile app that supports ARRL and the amateur radio community. Cash awards totaling up to \$25,000 will be presented to one or more winning entries.

The competition officially begins on January 1, 2026, when complete rules and application specifications will be released at coding.arrl.org. Participants are reminded not to start coding yet — entries must follow the published requirements. Project submissions will be due by March 31, 2026. Entries will be judged on how well they meet the specifications, user interface design and usability, code quality and stability, and the inclusion of extra features.

Adult ARRL members are encouraged to help spread the word and support the next generation of amateur radio innovators. [ARRL Student Membership](#) is free for full-time students aged 21 and younger, removing a key barrier to participation. Young hams, educators, and mentors are encouraged to pre-register now at coding.arrl.org to receive updates as additional details become available and to prepare for this exciting opportunity to contribute lasting tools to amateur radio.

OBSOLETE PART 97 RULES TO BE DELETED FEBRUARY 10, 2026

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in October 2025 adopted a Report and Order to delete almost 400 obsolete rules pertaining to its wireless services. As [previously reported by ARRL](#), among the deletions were four in Part 97 that govern the Amateur Radio Service.

ARRL reports that the notice of the Report and Order has now been published in the [Federal Register](#). Unless an objection is raised by January 2 that the Commission finds to deserve its consideration, the following four Part 97 provisions will be deleted as of February 10, 2026:

1. **§ 97.27.** This provision is duplicative of a statutory provision related to the FCC's right to modify station licenses.
2. **§ 97.29.** This provision specified an obsolete procedure to replace paper licenses. ARRL proposed deleting this section in comments filed earlier this year.
3. **§ 97.315 (b)(2).** This obsolete provision grandfathered HF amplifiers purchased before April 28, 1978 by an amateur radio operator for use at that operator's station, and grandfathered those manufactured before April 28, 1978, for which a marketing waiver was issued.
4. **§ 97.521(b) and Appendix 2.** This rule and appendix relate to obsolete VEC regions.

FCC ALLOCATES 60-METER WORLD-WIDE AMATEUR BAND

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on December 9, 2025, released a long-awaited [Report and Order](#) adopting a new amateur radio spectrum allocation in the 60-meter

band that was approved for world-wide use on a secondary basis in the WRC-15 (World Radiocommunication Conference 2015) [Final Acts](#). The Commission also agreed with a petition from [ARRL](#) The National Association for Amateur Radio® to continue to allow amateur operations on four existing 60-meter channels outside the international allocation with a full 100 watts. **The new rules will go into effect 30 days after publication in the Federal Register, when amateurs may then begin using the allocation.**

Specifically, the Commission allocated 5351.5 - 5366.5 kHz (60 meters) to the amateur service **on a secondary basis with a permitted power of 9.15 watts ERP**. The Commission also authorized amateurs to continue using four existing channels outside of the 5351.5 - 5366.5 kHz band centered on 5332, 5348, 5373, and 5405 kHz on a secondary basis with a permitted power of 100 watts ERP. There are no antenna restrictions but antenna gain must be used to calculate ERP.

The 60-meter allocation is available to amateurs holding a General Class or above license. The maximum permissible signal bandwidth is 2.8 kHz.

Amateurs are cautioned that this allocation is strictly on a secondary basis, and amateurs must avoid interfering with non-amateur stations using this spectrum. This obligation includes the responsibility to monitor for such stations using appropriate receiver bandwidths. The FCC emphasized that "allowing amateur operations in this band while fully protecting incumbent primary Federal operations is our priority, and even intermittent interference in this band could jeopardize important Federal operations."

The Commission left open [ARRL's 2017 Petition for Rulemaking](#) to implement this WRC allocation (RM-11785), stating that "we expect the Commission may address any necessary power adjustments for the new 15 kilohertz international allocation in that proceeding." ARRL will be observing operations in the new band to evaluate the effect of the 9.15-watt limit and already has been monitoring the regulations and experiences of amateurs in other countries.

Finally, in the same Report and Order, the FCC updated 420 - 450 MHz coordination and contact information for geographic areas where the peak envelope power (PEP) of amateur stations operating is generally limited to 50 watts. There was no substantive change to the areas covered by the power limitation.

Related ARRL News Stories (Background)

World Radiocommunication Conference Approves Global 60 Meter Allocation! (ARRL News 11/18/2015)

www.arrl.org/news/world-radiocommunication-conference-approves-global-60-meter-allocation

It's a Wrap: WRC-15 Concludes in Geneva (ARRL News 11/27/2015)

www.arrl.org/news/it-s-a-wrap-wrc-15-concludes-in-geneva

ARRL Asks FCC to Allocate New 5 MHz Band, Retain Channels and Current Power Limit (ARRL News 1/12/2017)

www.arrl.org/news/arrl-asks-fcc-to-allocate-new-5-mhz-band-retain-channels-and-current-power-limit

FCC Invites Comments on ARRL Petition to Allocate New 5 MHz Band (ARRL News 2/16/2017)

www.arrl.org/news/fcc-invites-comments-on-arrl-petition-to-allocate-new-5-mhz-band
ARRL Urges Comments to FCC on 60-Meter Band (ARRL News 10/30/2023)

www.arrl.org/news/arrl-urges-comments-to-fcc-on-60-meter-band ARRL Advocates for Radio Amateurs as FCC Proposes Changes to 60-Meter Band (ARRL News 4/28/2023)

www.arrl.org/news/arrl-advocates-for-radio-amateurs-as-fcc-proposes-changes-to-60-meter-band --ARRL

SHORTS

TEXAS FIRM LAUNCHES LARGEST COMMERCIAL SATELLITE The huge satellite is called BlueBird6 and it was launched on the 23rd of December from India's Satish Dhawan Space Center, blazing the path to the so-called next-generation constellation of space-based cellular broadband satellites by AST SpaceMobile. The satellite features an array of antennas which, when deployed, compares in size to the dimensions of a tennis court: 693 square feet, or about 64 square metres.

The project by the Texas-based startup is considered a direct rival to SpaceX's Starlink constellation.

Last September, the FCC's Space Bureau granted AST SpaceMobile limited use of frequencies in the amateur band between 430 and 440 MHz.

Permission was given on an emergency basis only after overwhelming objections raised by ham radio operators and amateur radio societies worldwide. They argued that alternate UHF frequencies are available for the satellite's telemetry, tracking and command functions.
--Newsline, Travis Lisk N3ILS

FIRST DESECHEO ISLAND ACTIVATION SINCE 2009 --There has been no amateur activity from Desecheo Island, 13 miles off the Puerto Rican coast, since 2009 – but now the first Puerto Rican-led DXpedition in 48 years to KP5 is preparing for that moment. The organisers, the Manyana DX Foundation and the Vieques Island Amateur Radio Club, are calling the activation of this small uninhabited island a "landmark DXpedition."

It is a protected nature reserve with strict limits to access, so two self-contained remote deployable units, or RDUs, will be set out in the second week of January. Operators have undergone training specific to the remote activation. They expect to be on the air within 24 hours of RDUs' deployment, operating around the clock for about 30 days on 160-6 metres, CW, SSB and FT8. A live stream will be available from Club Log.

Of course, expect pileups. The island is the 14th most wanted entity on the DXCC list.
--Newsline,QRZ.COM, 425 DX BULLETIN

EASING THE WAY FOR BLIND HAMS TO USE DIGITAL MODES -- One of the gifts that Darrell Hilliker, NU7I, has provided to users of contemporary technology is his blog, Blind Access Journal. As an advocate for people who are blind like Darrell - or perhaps challenged by low vision or obstacles posed by aging - he has developed his blog to provide resources to developers, decision-makers and other consumers of technology so they can make the modern world more accessible to everyone.

The Arizona radio amateur has now issued a call - a QST in every sense - asking fellow hams to turn their efforts toward making digital mode software such as WSJT-X more accessible too.

Darrell said in a press release that the increasing popularity of digital modes has made it harder for hams with disabilities to participate fully because an accessible user interface is missing from the software. He wrote: [quote] "A month doesn't go by where I don't hear at least one conversation on the bands where an older ham is contemplating giving up or curtailing their activities due to a physical disability like arthritis or a visual impairment. We can do better as a community—and we can do it together."

He is issuing a call, through his blog, "to inspire and engage members of the amateur radio community." He said that because WSJT-X is open source, it provides an opportunity for collaboration for improvements in keyboard navigation, screen reader support and overall usability. He hopes his blog can be a place where advocates, developers and users can brainstorm.

To volunteer or simply to learn more, contact Darrell at editor at blindaccessjournal - that's one word - dot com. (editor@blindaccessjournal.com) --Newsline

NEW ZEALAND HAMS USE "ZM" PREFIX FOR CENTENARY YEAR – How do you show pride in the group that has come to represent and advocate for amateur radio in New Zealand? One way is to drop the "ZL" prefix and swap it out with "ZM" during the centenary year of 2026. So be listening! The "ZM" prefix is a recognized special-event callsign in New Zealand and has been used before. This occasion is a far happier one than the previous authorization by Radio Spectrum Management, which allowed the use of "ZM" during the period of the COVID-19 lockdown.

Don't worry, the "ZL" prefix isn't going away for the year. You'll see be hearing for special event callsigns such as ZL100MVL and ZL100AM, which have been approved for use until 31 March. – (NZART, 425 DX BULLETIN)

ON THE AIR MAGAZINE is the newest ARRL member benefit to help new licensees and beginner-to-intermediate radio communicators navigate the world of amateur radio. Delivered six times a year, the magazine will present articles, how-to's, and tips for selecting equipment, building projects, getting involved in emergency communication as well as spotlighting the experiences of people using radio to serve their communities, and those using it for enjoyment.

Whether you just passed your Technician exam or have been licensed for years but never got around to making contacts or starting a project, *On the Air* can help you take your interest in radio to the next level with clear, useful information. **Current Issue and Archive**

Non-members: [Click here](#) to view a sample issue of *On the Air* magazine.

Members: [Click here](#) to view the latest issue of *On the Air*.

To view the current digital magazines or archived editions, members must log in with their registered username and password. Your username and password will be the same credentials used to log in to the ARRL website. If you are having difficulty logging in to the digital formats, please visit the [Member Support](#) page for login assistance.

THE ON THE AIR PODCAST is a companion to the bimonthly *On the Air* magazine (an ARRL membership benefit) and takes a deeper dive into select features and projects. Each month, host and *On the Air* Editorial Director Becky Schoenfeld, W1BXY, will offer additional resources, techniques, and hints to help you get the most from the magazine's content.

The *On the Air* podcast is sponsored by [Icom](#) -- for the love of amateur radio.

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Episode Guide:

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THANKS FOR READING

THE RCA ARC MONTHLY NEWSLETTER IS COMPILED AND EDITED BY JIM RINEHART, K9RU AND JIM KEETH, AF9A. ALL MATERIAL CONTAINED HEREIN IS OBTAINED FROM THE SOURCES CREDITED AND EDITED FOR THIS NEWSLETTER.
