

Loudoun Amateur Radio Group

Regular Meeting Notes May 21, 2022

Venue: Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Leesburg

- Call To Order at 8:00 am.
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Jim N4FAF reported that the minutes from the April meeting can be accessed via the club web site.
- John W0MPM was absent, so Mike N4PDY reported that the bank account balance as of the end of March is \$11,968.
- There was a discussion about the Gravel Grinder bike race earlier this month. Several pictures were presented on the projector showing the extensive rain and the bicyclists. Steve KS1G reminded us that Kevin AK2M and Harry KI2H performed a four-hour RF survey of the race course prior to the event. The survey resulted in the need for operators to provide an elevated antenna so that simplex communications would be possible throughout the course.
- The club tower trailer is at the QTH of Denny KF4TJI. He would like to find a new home for the trailer.
- The club will have an event for all members on June 25 to participate in the national Field Day event sponsored by the ARRL. The radios will be set up on the property of the Loudoun INOVA hospital at Landsdown. A grassy area is available to set up antennas, but the radio operators must be positioned on the parking lot. The club has purchased two 10' x 20' tents to provide shade for the operators. The hospital has required that we have signs visible from the road to indicate that the tents and antennas are a radio club event and not an on-going emergency at the hospital. It is also required that we have an open line of communication with the hospital to facilitate event management. It was noted that the grass might need to be cut before the event.

The club will operate as a class 2A station. A GOTA station and a VHF satellite station will be included in addition to the two HF Stations. An event to practice setting up the tents will be organized prior to the event setup. Many captains and leads will be needed to be sure that all aspects of the event are covered. Contact Bryan K1NSA to volunteer. Updates to the organization will be distributed via the club email reflector.

- Kevin WA4KBM presented information related to the Grid Tracker tool. The tool ties in with the WSJT-X digital radio software package as well as many QSL Internet logging sites to provide sorted information about contacts. It indicates when new contacts are found when operating digital modes. It also analyzes grid squares to determine if a new grid square can be contacted. The tool can be downloaded from the web site gridtracker.org. It is free software and runs on several computing platforms including

Loudoun Amateur Radio Group Regular Meeting Notes May 21, 2022

Windows, Linux and Raspberry PI. When using a Raspberry PI, it is recommended that the computer be populated with 8 GB of RAM. Even with the amount of memory, the Grid Tracker software requires all available CPU when used with the digital radio software.

- Steve KS1G reported that a presentation for the June meeting has been arranged. Presentations for the remaining months of 2022 are still needed.
- The HF bands are opening with the onset of Solar Cycle 25. Contacts with the Pacific islands and southern hemisphere have become easier.
- Joe KD4HAX reported that several digital modes may change in the next couple of years. AX.25 protocol will be used as the lowest level protocol. This change will require that all operators update their software to be able to communicate as a single group.
- Steve KS1G received QSL cards from recent DX-peditions. A card from the Galapagos was included that was particularly nice.
- Chris W4PMP reported that he recently was contacted by the incoming QSL card bureau. They told him that he had many cards that were sent by other hams. Chris sent the bureau a few dollars for postage and received approximately 100 cards via US Post. He also reported that his Flex radio failed after a recent software update. The problem was a failed flash card. Flex provided excellent customer support to resolve the issue.
- The next club meeting is scheduled for June 18 at the Lutheran Church in Leesburg.
- The meeting adjourned at 9:55 AM.

Attendance:

W4PMP	Chris
K3WD	Bill
KD4NYX	Wendy
KD4HAX	Joe
KS1G	Steve
KF4TJI	Denny
KF4TJJ	Carol
K9TRE	Tareck
KT9N	Chris

Loudoun Amateur Radio Group
Regular Meeting Notes May 21, 2022

KE5S	Dave
KC5CG	Gump
WA4KBM	Kevin
N4PDY	Mike
N4FAF	Jim
K1NSA	Bryan