

Loudoun Amateur Radio Group

Regular Meeting Minutes January 18, 2025

Venue: Leesburg Lutheran Church

Meeting called to order at 8:35 AM.

- Pledge of allegiance.
- Steve KS1G and Megan KQ4MAM gave a presentation describing the recent club support for a radio contact between the students of the Hillsboro Charter Academy and the International Space Station. The club has previously ARISS contacts coordinated by Steve in 2019 and 2021. Megan has been a teacher for 21 years. She developed an interest in contacting the station early in her teaching career. She attended a teachers initiative program at ARRL headquarters during which she earned her ham license. The program is free to any teachers with an interest in amateur radio.

The process of the contact was started approximately one year before the actual event. Steve wrote a proposal for the project. The proposal was based on the previous two contacts. The proposal must include a justification for interest in the space program as well as a description of the technical competence needed to successfully complete the contact during the short time that the station is overhead.

A reference to heywhatsthat.com was communicated. The website can be used to generate a map of the horizon at any point on the earth's surface. Knowing the horizon is important to understand the visibility of the station during the pass during the event. The club antenna trailer was used to provide a rotating mount for the directional antennas. The operation of the rotors was checked several times during practice passes.

Setup of the antennas and audio system was performed over a period of two days prior to the event. Brian King of Superlative Events provided the equipment and direct connection between the radio and the public address system. The event was covered by channel 5 news and several local papers. An after event report will be written and submitted to the ARISS group to describe the event. Additional local interest in a space station contact has been expressed by Loudoun County schools and the Middleburg Community Charter School.

- Kevin WA4KBM gave a presentation describing his project to build an APRS digipeater. The digipeater was constructed after gaps in course coverage were found during club support for the Reston Bike Club Century and other bike rides. The system is contained in a watertight enclosure. The components include a UBLOX USB GPS receiver, Raspberry Pi Zero W with 4 port USB hat, Retvis RA-86 radio, PowerBank (50000 mA/hr). Software includes Direwolf, TMUX and Auto Hotspot. The system operates as a store-and-forward system and uses an external 2 meter antenna.

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- Elections were held for the 2025 club officers and Board members. The incumbent Board members Paul Dluhosh N4PD and Chris Brown W4PMP were reelected. Other incumbent Board members were not up for reelection. The incumbent officers Stephen Green (Vice President, KS1G), Tareck Ellass (Treasurer, K9TRE) and James Babcock (Secretary, N4FAF) were reelected. Steve Radloff N4RAF was elected as President. The incumbent President Kevin WA4KBM will serve on the IT committee.
- There was a discussion about online ham radio training and exam sessions. W4EEY.COM was recommended as a source of exam training courses. Other members have use hamstudy.org. Online exams can be found at the web page <https://www.arrl.org/online-exam-session>.
- The treasurer Tareck K9TRE reported that the club checking account balance is \$11,181.39. Dues for 2025 are being collected.
- The meeting adjourned at 10:20. The next club meeting is scheduled for February 15.

- Attendance

N4RAF	Steve
KM4GC	Doug
K2BFY	Henry
KK4RNV	Val
K4AIU	Doug
KQ4MAM	Megan
K4FW	Jim
N2ALA	Dwight
NOCALL	Lisa
WA4TXE	David
KQ4VZF	Patrick
KQ4ZMC	Andrew
W4PMP	Chris
N4PD	Paul
WA4KBM	Kevin

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KS1G	Steve
K9TRE	Tarek
N4FAF	Jim