

Loudoun Amateur Radio Group

Regular Meeting Minutes October 18, 2025

Venue: Leesburg Lutheran Church

Meeting called to order at 8:35 AM.

- Pledge of allegiance.
- Bryan K1NSA presented a report of his experiences dropping antenna pull ropes in trees using a commercial drone. He purchased a DJI mini 4K drone and added an air drop kit as a strap on accessory. He reported that one or more CamJam XT devices were used for weight at the end of the pull rope. Mason string was used to drop over the tree branch. Paracord was tied to the end of the pull cord and pulled over the branch to support the antenna.

There was discussion about the laws that apply to personal drone use. An online safety test is required before flight. Total takeoff weight must be < 250 grams. No flights are permitted in Virginia state parks. It is important to watch for power lines and gusting winds during drone flights.

- Patrick KQ4VZF reported on his experience supporting the BikeMS ride on September 13. The route used by the bikers followed the same course that was used by the Reston Bike Club for their century ride. The event was not sponsored by the club, but Patrick participated as an individual. Additional radio operators were recruited from other local radio clubs and from the NERA repeater group. The WA4TXE repeater pair was used for primary operations. The NERA repeaters were used as backup. It was noted that the NERA group was quite helpful during planning for the event support.
- David WA4TXE reported that his repeater on 146.850 MHz has been installed with a new tower. Coverage over western Loudoun is much better. It was suggested that voice coverage over the century bike courses should be rechecked before the next event.
- Doug KM4GC gave an after action report for the Loudoun ARES Simulated Emergency Test (SET) event on October 4. Radios were positioned in parking areas of several High Schools to check RF coverage using local repeaters. The High schools are expected to be used as temporary shelters during an event where evacuees must be accommodated. There was also an operator at the Loudoun EOC in Leesburg. The WA4TXE repeater pair was the primary frequency, and the WB6EFW repeater was designated as the secondary frequency. The event included Rob K4BCN who is a county employee at the EOC.

Winlink was used to transfer detailed information between the shelters and the EOC. It was noted that two radio operators in the EOC were very busy when Winlink need to be processed in addition to the radio traffic.

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- There was a short discussion about the club POTA activation on October 11 that was organized by Steve N4RAF. There were two radios used operating on HF bands. One used a 20m rigid dipole. The second used a 40m end fed wire antenna. The club callsign was used during the activation, and the park was successfully activated.
- It was suggested that D*STAR digital mode should be experimented with by the membership. ICOM and Kenwood radios are the primary implementers of D*STAR. There was casual interest from the members present.
- Jim N4FAF reported that the minutes from the September meeting were distributed on the email reflector and stored on the club website. The minutes were approved by the members present.
- Tareck K9TRE provided the bank Treasurer Report to Steve KS1G. There was no income during the previous month, and the expenses were \$14.50. The current bank account balance is \$10,715.69.
- The meeting adjourned at 10:25. The next club meeting is scheduled for November 15.

- Attendance

K1NSA	Bryan
KR4EON	Nigel
K2BFY	Henry
KM4GC	Doug
K4FWD	Frank
KO4WLF	Bryan
KR4BXO	Jerry
W3RJT	Rob
KJ4NXG	Bob
KJ4BXA	Lloyd
KE4S	Dave
WA4KBM	Kevin
N3UW	Rich

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MEMBERS OF BOD PRESENT:

W4PMP	Chris
K4FW	Jim
N4PD	Paul
K3WD	Bill
WA4TXE	David

OFFICERS PRESENT:

KS1G	Steve
N4FAF	Jim