

2016 Annual Meeting
ARRL Board of Directors
Hartford, Connecticut
January 16, 2016
Report of the Chief Operating Officer – Document 8
Submitted by Harold Kramer, WJ1B

Executive Summary

In 2015, we ended the year at a near record-high membership with over 170,500 members despite a dues increase in 2016. While new amateur licenses issued are down by 4% from last year's record-setting pace, they are 11% above the typical annual totals. Upgraded licenses are up 6% compared to last year.

An expanded suite of ARRL e-books on the Kindle platform created a new revenue stream and increased our worldwide visibility. Despite a slow first half of the year, publication sales results exceeded forecast for the second half, primarily due to a successful *Handbook* and *Antenna Book* marketing campaign. The ARRL Letter crested 101,000 subscribers.

The Lab significantly improved its Product Review capabilities with upgraded test equipment. The ARISS program celebrated its 15th anniversary. Since the year 2000, 980 ARISS contacts have been completed. Four Teachers Institute were conducted drawing 32 teachers from 21 states.

Radiosport maintained a two-to-three week DXCC processing time for the 1.1 million QSOs and 14,500 applications that were submitted. LoTW QSO records exceeded 75 million from more than 82,000 registered users. We fulfilled about 5,000 Centennial QSO Party certificates and plaques.

We were capably represented by members of the ARRL Emergency Preparedness team at the first annual FEMA National Partnership Day in Washington DC. The Field Organization team conducted a Section Managers' Workshop for 19 new Section Managers in September.

Advertising sales, despite a number of significant obstacles, met their sales goal of \$2.4 million through hard work and persistence.

I spent much of my time working with the Strategic Planning Working Group on the ARRL Strategic Plan that will be presented at the Board Meeting.

Marketing and Membership Services

Bob Inderbitzen, NQ1R, Department Manager

Diane Petrilli, KB1RNF, Membership Manager

Jackie Ferreira, KB1PWB, Product Marketing Specialist

Yvette Vinci, KC1AIM, Member Services/Circulation Manager

Steve Capodicasa, Warehouse Supervisor

Staffing

In August, former staffer Elizabeth Karpiej, KA1DTU, returned to HQ to fill the open position of Front Desk Receptionist. In October, Matthew Brady joined our staff to fill an open Warehouse Clerk position. All other positions were unchanged in 2015.

Membership

We ended the year with 170,528 members; gains of 4,864 members over 2014 and 2,801 ahead of what we had projected when the 2015-16 operational plan was created. This is an increase of 2.94% for the year (2.13% in 2014, 1.21% in 2013). ARRL membership, having climbed for the ninth consecutive year, now stands at its highest total in 19 years. This bodes well as we begin 2016 with the first dues increase in more than a decade.

Membership Manager Diane Petrilli, KB1RNF, reported that the majority of this year's growth is attributed to effective mail campaigns and e-mails to specific targeted groups. These efforts have been bolstered by activities throughout the organization that have helped grow our e-mail lists. Our membership campaigns and benefit summaries have been updated to reflect information gathered from our national-level market study of Amateur Radio operators, completed earlier in the year.

Additionally, high numbers of new licensees and upgrades this year have further contributed to our strong membership results. The ARRL website, renewal notices, and mailings to new licensees were all significant sources of membership acquisition. Applications received from hamfests, conventions, clubs and Field Organization volunteers were 4% of all acquisitions. The average monthly rate of members renewing on time in 2015 was 72.4% (72.5% in 2014).

Sources of membership acquisition in 2015 and 2014:

	2014	2015
Direct Mail 120 days	22%	24%
Website	19%	26%
Renewal Notices	12%	10%
New Ham Mailings	12%	11%
E-mailings	8%	11%
Field-based Recruitment	4%	4%
All other sources	23%	14%
TOTAL	100%	100%

International membership showed a slight decline, probably attributable to the strong dollar, and being further away from the novelty of the online digital edition of *QST* in 2012, that contributed a surge of new international members over the past couple of years.

Throughout the second half of the year, membership materials were updated to reflect the increases in dues amounts, effective January 1, 2016. Information about the dues increase and the “value of ARRL membership” was included with renewal notices beginning in October. There have only been a small number of complaints about the increase since the decision was made at July’s Board meeting.

Digital Edition of *QST*

The digital edition of *QST* is leveraged as a key benefit in appeals and messaging to ARRL members — including prospective, renewing, and current members. The Member Services team provides “help desk” support for the digital edition of *QST* and related ARRL website user accounts. The Circulation Manager administers monthly notification of the digital edition of *QST*. By yearend, over 122,000 members (up from 115,000 in 2014) receive a monthly e-mail announcement for the latest edition, and a follow-up message highlighting “What’s trending,” which is based on early analytics for each issue. We have also increased the number of members who have opted to receive digital *QST* only to 7,449 (2,952 are international members).

Publication Sales

Publication and product sales were \$1,709,463 for the second half of the year, exceeding the forecast by \$42,538. These results are a stark contrast to the sluggish first half of the year. Total sales in 2015 were \$3,084,938 -- \$149,431 behind the forecast goal. Direct sales were 59% of total sales (the same as 2014). Not included in the yearend sales figures are royalties earned on sales of our growing list of Kindle e-books that totaled \$63,855 in 2015. This new source of revenue is a result of our accelerated efforts to increase the number of our titles available as digital editions in the Kindle format — Amazon’s proprietary e-book platform.

A new edition of *The Antenna Book* was introduced together with the annual new edition of *The Handbook* in October. Our decision to market and promote the two books together paid off, contributing combined sales for the books of \$422,852 during the fourth quarter. This was \$83,501 more than 2014.

Official merchandise for the 2016 National Parks on the Air event was introduced in November 2015. The product line, which includes shirts, hats, pins, patches, stickers, mugs, and banners, contributed to sales of nearly \$10K to date. In March, we finalized an agreement with Begali Keys to manufacture a limited edition ARRL Begali key. The custom key was introduced in April, and 69 units were fulfilled in 2015.

Product Marketing Specialist Jackie Ferreira, KB1PWB, reported the following list of the top 10 grossing products that contributed 60% of sales in 2015:

Item	Quantity	Gross Sales
<i>ARRL Ham Radio License Manual</i>	24,264	\$512,111
<i>ARRL Handbook</i>	10,227	\$394,372
<i>ARRL Antenna Book</i>	6,776	\$269,841
<i>ARRL General Class License Manual</i>	10,348	\$238,318
<i>ARRL Repeater Directory</i>	11,310	\$111,987
<i>ARRL Extra Class License Manual</i>	5,071	\$109,712
2015 ARRL Field Day Shirt	4,202	\$59,758
<i>ARRL Operating Manual</i>	2,446	\$52,987
<i>Oscilloscopes for Radio Amateurs</i>	3,015	\$49,423
<i>Propagation and Radio Science</i>	2,451	\$49,309

Affinity Membership Benefits

Efforts to promote and service our suite of Affinity Membership Benefits continued throughout 2015. While yearend figures are not yet available, royalties earned for the ARRL Visa credit card program will most likely exceed \$40K in 2015. The introduction of Liberty Mutual Insurance as our new benefit provider for home and auto insurance (previously MetLife) went smoothly in 2015. While the program has only returned a small number of policies, feedback from members has been very good.

HQ Volunteers

Our dedicated group of volunteers gave 773 tours of ARRL Headquarters in 2015. There are over 30 volunteers — all ARRL members from throughout Connecticut. Along with acting as tour guides these volunteers assist many department, including Radiosport, Education Services, and the Lab. A recognition luncheon was held for the group in November.

Fulfillment and Warehouse

Warehouse Supervisor Steve Capodicasa reported that the warehouse processed 51,134 packages for individual and dealer orders in 2015 compared to 48,876 in 2014.

We installed new telephone management software that has resulted in improved staffing allocations and better service to members. In October, refurbished office workstations were installed.

Conventions and Hamfests

We provided increased promotion and support for these conventions and events in 2015:

- Southeastern Division Convention in Orlando, Florida – February
- Wisconsin State Convention at AES, Milwaukee, Wisconsin – March
- Dayton Hamvention, Dayton, Ohio – May (featuring ARRL EXPO)
- Northwestern Division Convention in Seaside, Oregon – June
- West Gulf Division Convention in Irving, Texas – June
- International Amateur Radio Exhibition in Germany – June
- New England Division Convention in Boxborough, Massachusetts – August
- South Texas Convention in Austin, Texas - August
- Pacific Division Convention in San Ramon, California – November

Following the Board's decision to sanction Orlando HamCation as the ARRL National Convention in February 2016, our planning began to organize ARRL's exhibits, activities, and team for the event. Most of the convention planning was completed by yearend, and the Executive Committee approved the program in December.

ARRL VEC

Maria Somma, AB1FM, ARRL VEC Manager
Perry Green, WY1O, Assistant VEC Manager

We filled two vacant VEC representative positions in September. These new representatives are Stephanie Borden, KC1ELY and Annie Brady. The department is now fully staffed.

The ARRL VEC is the largest VEC in the United States. Our market share of total Amateur Radio exams administered remains stable at 76%. The total number of US amateurs has continued to grow each year since the FCC license class restructure in 2000. As of December 31, 2015, the amount of licensees reached an all-time high of 735,405. Reviewing the three current license classes through December, the number of Technicians peaked at 363,806, the number of Generals at 172,603, and the number of Extras at 139,901. The outdated Novice and Advanced class licenses continue to decline.

For the second year in a row, we have conducted more than 7,000 Amateur Radio exam sessions in a year, an important milestone for the ARRL VEC. Here are some 2015 highlights:

- While new amateur licenses issued are down by 4% from last year's record-setting pace, they are 11% above the typical totals from previous years (32,077 in 2015, 33,241 in 2014, and 28,886 in 2013).
- Upgraded licenses are up 6% compared to last year (11,224 vs 10,556).
- 44,155 total license application forms were filed, compared to 43,124 in 2014.
- A total of 7358 exam sessions were conducted in 2015, up slightly from 7,216 in 2014.
- 38,261 exam applicants were served in 2015, compared to 39,184 in 2014.
- Exam elements administered decreased 3%, from 51,647 last year to 50,004 this year.

- 2,129 new Volunteer Examiners (VEs) have been added to our program.

In addition to exam administration, VEC continues to provide *QST* with the Exam Info column in January and July, publish the VE Honor Roll quarterly, and the Silent Key column monthly. We also distribute VE Newsletters via e-mail and manage the License class certificate program (formerly known as the Extra class certificate program).

Education Services

Debra Johnson, K1DMJ, Department Manager

License Instruction

In 2015, we produced a new *ARRL Technician-General Instructors Manual* that coordinates with *The Ham Radio License Manual* and the *General Class License Manual*, 8th edition. The *PowerPoint* modules that correspond to the lessons published in the book can be downloaded from the ARRL website by ARRL Registered Instructors.

We produced three issues of “*Radio Waves*,” our e-newsletter for instructors and teachers. Distribution now exceeds 11,000. The fall issue was also published in print form, principally to be used for public and legislative relations.

The specifications for the instructor activity database that will support a new instructor recognition program were developed, but work was suspended as resources were shifted to the National Parks on the Air project. Work on the project will resume in 2016.

A total of 569 instructors and 82 teachers signed up to be added to our Instructor/Teacher database in 2015.

Education & Technology Program

We completed three sessions of the Teachers Institute, which included two sessions of the *Introduction to Wireless Technology* (TI-1), and one session of the TI-2 on *Remote Sensing and Data Gathering*, with 32 participating teachers from 21 states. A new initiative to raise money to support the Education & Technology Program by asking donors to fund a seat at the TI is generating a positive response. In December, a donor stepped forward to fund an on-site TI in Colorado in 2016. As a bonus, this member’s donation was matched by his employer.

ARISS – Amateur Radio on the International Space Station

The ARISS program celebrated its 15th anniversary of operations this past November. Since the year 2000, 980 scheduled contacts with educational organizations around the world have been supported. The international program team successfully executed 18 US and 52 international contacts in schools and other educational venues during 2015. The breakdown of direct vs telebridge contacts is as follows:

ARISS QSOs	Direct	Telebridge	Total
US	12	6	18
International	29	23	52
Total	41	29	70

A total of 36 proposals to host scheduled contacts through the ARISS program were reviewed during 2015 and 31 US host organizations has been selected to develop equipment plans and host contacts in 2016.

ARRL has almost completed an ARISS loaner station for clubs needing equipment to support ARISS contacts at schools and other host locations. Joe Carcia and Bob Allison designed the station configuration and they will be configuring shipping containers for safe transportation of the equipment as well as detailed instructions for its use.

Fundraising is under way to address future funding for operations as well as for hardware upgrades for the station aboard the ISS. The NASA Program Office and the Satellite Communications and Navigation (SCaN) Program have now committed funding for operational support for the program through March 2017. ARISS is looking for individual and corporate donors to fund operations beyond that date. Thus far, ARISS has received several donations to be used for station equipment upgrades needed in the Columbus module that is located in the US Operating segment of the ISS.

The ARISS International partners met in Tokyo in August in conjunction with JARL's 90th anniversary ham convention. Meetings there tackled revisions of terms of reference, organization of a new sustainability and funding committee, and the opening discussions about plans to develop upgraded equipment for the Columbus module of the ISS. In 2015, ARISS leadership focused on strengthening the working relationships with other international partners and initiated a series of contacts and meetings with the aim of refreshing and rebuilding sustaining relationships at NASA.

Business Services

Debra Jahnke, K1DAJ, Department Manager

Advertising Sales

During 2015, we met our original sales goal of \$2.45 million. This goal was achieved despite a number of obstacles. During the summer months, we lost a number of advertisers. Several were temporary losses due to financial difficulties. However, two full pages were lost from RKR Designs and TEN-TEC (owned by RKR Designs). The fate of these two companies is unknown and we have no expectation of reclaiming these advertising dollars in the near future. Later in the year, we lost a long-standing full page from Powerwerx and saw cutbacks by several other clients citing sluggish sales. We were able to obtain some transient advertising that, for the most part, compensated for our losses. Industry consolidation and ongoing financial difficulties for advertisers will continue to be matters of concern for advertising sales.

Wholesale Publication Sales

For the majority of the year, wholesale book sales continued to mirror the 2014 totals, with Amazon.com taking a larger share of sales, while sales from smaller “mom and pop” operations decreased. In November, dealer sales declined substantially from the previous year. We found that the primary reason was a very large drop in wholesale *ARRL Handbook* sales and less than anticipated wholesale interest in the new edition of the *ARRL Antenna Book*, despite our numerous solicitations.

A significant source of the decrease was that Amazon purchased 1,006 copies fewer copies than in the previous year. Amazon is a difficult company to have a conversation with and their intractable reasoning for the decreased quantity purchases was that “their trending models projected substantially lower sales.” Despite the decline of Amazon sales regarding specific titles, of the \$1.27 million in 2015 wholesale publications revenue, \$687,073 came from Amazon. The majority of their purchases were our training materials such as *The Ham Radio License Manual*.

Another issue affecting wholesale sales is that we are no longer doing business with book wholesaler Baker & Taylor due to their unscrupulous business practices and their reluctance to pay their bills. We proposed reasonable terms for future transactions; however, they refused.

Our traditional wholesale dealers continue to report sluggish sales, placing the blame on completion from Amazon and our own retail efforts. They continue to ask for the equivalent retail specials we provide to members. They would also like free shipping. However, with the exception of several major resellers, they show little interest in improving their websites or their sales techniques. It is doubtful, even if we provided sales incentives outside of current our policies that their situations would substantially improve.

ARRL On-Line Auction

We held our 10th annual auction at the end of October and it produced excellent results. We started with 270 items up for bid, a mix of Product Review equipment, donated items, rare books and one-of-a-kind finds. With 1383 bids, our gross revenue was \$41068. Revenue was less than 2014 due to a smaller number of big-ticket Product Review items. However, our Vintage Book category peaked at \$5,000 with the biggest ticket item, *Henley's Workable Radio Receivers*, Copyright 1924, donated by an anonymous bidder, going for \$625.

Field Services and Radiosport (FSR)

Dave Patton, NN1N, Department Manager
Norm Fusaro, W3IZ, Assistant Department Manager
Sharon Taratula, Awards Manager
Sabrina Jackson, Administrative Manager
Mike Corey, KI1U, Emergency Preparedness Manager
Steve Ewald, WV1X, Field Services Manager
Joe Carcia, NJ1Q, W1AW Station Manager

Staffing

Bart Jahnke, W9JJ, was hired as Contest Manager beginning January 4, 2016 after the resignation of Matt Wilhelm, W1MSW in July. Dave Patton, NN1N, continues to serve on the PSC's LoTW Support Committee, Ad Hoc Subcommittee on VHF and Above Revitalization, and the PSC's DXCC Card Checker Rules Subcommittee. Awards Associate, Sanijela Zanic, left the staff in August to further her education.

Awards

DXCC paper application processing time ranged from 2 to 4 weeks throughout the year. LoTW processing time was 1 or 2 business days. Awards staff has been assisted by volunteers Vinny Sgroi, K1RM; Joel Wilks, AK1N, and David Kaplan, WA1OUI. The WAS certificate was also redesigned in 2015.

Two amateurs achieved the pinnacle of the VUCC program – confirming QSOs with all 488 U.S. grids on 6 meters to win the Fred Fish Memorial Award. They are Larry Lambert, NØLL (award # 6), and Lance Collister, W7GJ (award #7). W1AW's second shift operator, Scott Gee, continues to assist in the processing of VUCC applications and awards.

DXCC Statistics

	2014 Applications Received	2014 QSOs Received	2015 Applications Received	2015 QSOs Received
January	1,076	112,026	1,103	112,482
February	993	94,488	1,163	95,536
March	1,314	118,870	1,344	115,824
April	1,415	125,812	1,398	106,223
May	1,407	126,753	1,317	109,229
June	1,182	101,215	1,185	88,857
July	1,091	94,075	1,087	85,608
August	1,291	106,737	1,105	88,057
September	1,108	91,434	983	76,608
October	1,157	97,555	1,031	85,980
November	1,541	119,038	1,084	96,934
December	2,144	165,743	1,771	130,147
Totals	15,719	1,353,746	14,571	1,191,485

Logbook of The World

LoTW continues to grow in capability, usability, and in clients. Volunteers, including Dave Bernstein, AA6YQ and Rick Murphy, K1MU, continue to advance the capabilities of LoTW. The Board's LoTW Committee, led by Greg Widin, KØGW, with the assistance and support of IT Manager Mike Keane, K1MK, has made substantial progress in reducing LoTW's "technical debt." The chart below shows the growth of LoTW from December 31, 2014 through December 31, 2015:

Category	Dec. 31, 2014	Dec. 31, 2015	+/-	% Increase
QSO Records Entered Into System	650,922,928	726,776,554	75,853,626	11.7%
QSL Record Matches	104,855,772	121,454,532	16,598,760	15.8%
Logs Processed	7,409,274	9,033,976	1,624,702	21.9%
Active Certificates	110,294	122,360	12,066	10.9%
Registered Users in System	74,200	82,450	8,250	11.1%

Centennial QSO Party

Since the fulfillment of the Centennial QSO Party awards began in March 2015, staff has processed and shipped nearly 3,000 Challenge QSO certificates and over 2,000 W1AW WAS certificates. Several hundred W1AW/WAS plaques and nearly 700 plaques were produced and shipped. We experienced a third quarter increase after a promotional e-mail was sent to award qualifiers who had not yet placed orders for the various Centennial awards.

Centennial QSO Party Award Fulfillment

2015	QSO Points Challenge Certificates	W1AW/WAS Certificates	W1AW/WAS Plaques
March	1096	852	319
April	520	366	144
May	212	203	58
June	74	96	27
July	88	64	19
August	528	198	55
September	40	51	16
October	179	112	23
November	35	31	10
December	42	28	10
Totals	2814	2001	681

Contest Branch

Former Contest Manager, Dan Henderson, N1ND, acted as interim Contest Branch Manager from July to January until the new Contest Manager was hired.

The modernization of the contest program, both programmatically and operationally, is a continuing challenge and concern. We hope to make additional progress in 2016 working with the PSC's VHF/UHF Contest Revitalization Committee, which has already spearheaded some positive changes in the VHF and Up contest rules that were enacted in 2015.

QSL Bureau

The QSL Bureau received approximately 727,350 cards and shipped 725,550 in 2015. Thanks to Bureau volunteers Dave Kaplan, WA1OUI; Richard Lawrence, KB1DMX, and Mike Zeug W1YM, and Lisa Zeug, K1UQT, for their ongoing assistance.

Emergency Preparedness

There were no Ham Aid emergency deployments in the latter half of 2015. Ham Aid equipment was pre-deployed to Guam to provide better service to the Pacific insular areas during an active tropical cyclone season.

Mike Corey, KI1U and Ken Bailey, K1FUG, both attended emergency management training courses during the latter half of 2015. Mike Corey attended Community Mass Care and Emergency Assistance training provided by FEMA and NY State Emergency Management. He also attended an emergency preparedness course for places of worship provided by the National Disaster Interfaith Network. Both of these courses satisfy requirements for Certified Emergency Manager Training. Ken Bailey attended FEMA ICS 400 training.

In October, Mike Corey and Ken Bailey represented ARRL at the first annual FEMA National Partnership Day in Washington DC. While in DC, Mike and Ken also met with other ARRL partners – DHS/OEC, DOI Bureau of Indian Affairs and DHS SHARES.

From Aug. to Dec. 2015, ARRL Emergency Preparedness staff attended the following events:
ARRL South Florida Section Convention (KI1U)
Ham Jam, Atlanta, GA (KI1U)
National VOAD Fall Members Meeting, Atlanta, GA (KI1U)
International Association of Emergency Managers Conference, Las Vegas, NV (KI1U)
SKYWARN Recognition Day, Taunton, MA (KI1U and K1FUG)
National Public Safety Telecommunications Council, two conference calls (KI1U and W3KD)

The ARRL/Red Cross MOU negotiations were successfully concluded in December. A renewed MOU should be ready soon. It is currently awaiting final approval by Red Cross leadership.

Field Services

At the end of 2015, the ARRL Field Organization has 7,678 appointees in the database. Over the last six months of 2015, two Section Manager Elections (Los Angeles in the summer, and Santa Barbara in the fall) were decided by a vote of their respective Sections' members. Three sections (San Diego, Pacific and Virginia) are currently having balloted Section Manager Elections.

With staff support from many departments, the Field Organization Team conducted the Section Managers' Workshop for the 19 new Section Managers who started their first terms of office over the past 2 years. This orientation and training was conducted at Headquarters on September 18 – 20.

Once again, ARRL and the National Weather Service co-sponsored the annual SKYWARN Recognition Day, a popular operating event, on December 5, 2015, and ARRL sponsored the annual Simulated Emergency Test (SET) during the fall season.

W1AW

During the months of October and November, we hosted a number of scouts at the station including JOTA activity, Radio Merit Badge qualification sessions, and STEM Merit Badge Day. W1AW station manager Joe Carcia, NJ1Q, has been assembling and constructing equipment for use with the ARISS Go-Kit that will be sent to schools involved with ISS contacts. W1AW achieved DXCC Honor Roll in December

XX Towers, Inc. performed the antenna inspections and replaced the antenna rotator located atop the 120' tower.

Publications

Steve Ford, WB8IMY, Publications Manager
Becky Schoenfeld, W1BXY, QST Managing Editor
Shelly Bloom, WB1ENT, Production Supervisor

The second half of 2015 saw the publication of several book titles, including *The 2016 ARRL Handbook*, the 23rd edition of the *ARRL Antenna Book*, *Portable Antenna Classics*, *Work the World with JT65 and JT9*, *The Radio Amateur's Workbench*, the *2016 ARRL Calendar* and the second edition of *Small Antennas for Small Spaces*. Just as 2015 ended, we sent a new title to the printer – *Antenna Physics: An Introduction* – and it should arrive in stock by late January.

The *2015 ARRL Periodicals DVD* shipped to the replicators in early December and arrived in stock in the last week of the month.

Due to declining customer interest and an outdated software platform, we made the decision in early December to discontinue the *TravelPlus for Repeaters* CD-ROM product. At the same time, we also made the decision to discontinue the *iOS* and *Android Repeater Directory* apps for similar reasons. We will continue to support these apps until the end of 2016, but we are already actively exploring an alternative. Although the market for the printed *Repeater Directory* continues to decline, we will continue to produce this product for as long as it remains economically feasible to do so.

We continue to create Kindle versions of a number of popular titles. In the second half of 2015, we published a Kindle version of the *General Class License Manual*, and we will follow with more titles before the end of the year. We have also published our first Kindle-only title: *Discover Ham Radio*. Currently we offer 20 Kindle eBooks.

The circulation of *The ARRL Letter* has topped 101,000 and circulation of *Contest Update* and the *ARES E-Letter* continue to increase.

The editorship of *QEX* changed hands in December with the elimination of the Headquarters *QEX* Editor position and the departure of Larry Wolfgang, WR1B. Our off-site freelance technical editor Kai Siwiak, KE4PT, has assumed the editorship of *QEX*.

Digital Content

Allison Barbieri, KC1ARQ, Digital Content Manager

Since the November 2015 report, the ARRL Facebook page gained more than 1,000 more Likes and is now up to 60,990 total page Likes.

Digital *QST* readership has remained steady, averaging about 20,000 readers per month. However, our *QST* Android application has proven to be a problem since the summer. We have been working with Nxtbook, the publisher, by forwarding them member complaints, doing research of our own, and responding to our members. Nxtbook has determined that the Android application needs to be completely rebuilt. They are planning to have an updated version by the end of Quarter 1, 2016. Also during this time, we have been researching other options for digital publishers.

The ARRL website is averaging over 1.4 million unique page views each month, with the top viewed pages remaining the same throughout the year: The ARRL home page, and the Logbook of The World page on the ARRL website.

The ARRL Lab

Ed Hare, W1RFI, Lab Manager

During the last half of the year, the Lab purchased two Keysight digital signal generators. These generators usually cost \$55,000 each but the Lab was able to purchase them through Keysight's demo/marketing program for \$13,000 each. Both instruments are demo models, but we purchased them at a substantial savings with full warranties. The generators are being used to replace our aging Marconi and IFR instruments, one of which is no longer supported by Marconi. All Lab instruments are now fully supported by their manufacturers.

These instruments are also capable of running tests on digital receivers that our older instruments were not capable of doing. Keysight's regional sales manager, Joe Carr, and a Keysight consultant, Tom Holmes, N8ZM, visited ARRL HQ to introduce Bob Allison, WB1GCM, to more of these generators' capabilities. The Lab also received a donation of a Sigilent arbitrary waveform generator that can be used as a lab bench instrument for various testing purposes. It can also test noise blankers and AGC responses of receivers, a new capability for us. The acquisition of this new equipment does result in some of our current equipment being surplus to our needs, so the Lab will arrange its sale through a contracted vendor of used test equipment.

The Lab also reports that the amount of donated amateur equipment, principally from estates, is increasing. This has resulted in several additional pieces of equipment for the vintage display in the Lab. A few other pieces will be retained, but the Lab, with the help of volunteers, is cleaning up the equipment and selling off the routine items on eBay, resulting in a small but growing revenue stream being generated with minimal staff time costs.

Thanks

Much of this report was compiled and written by the ARRL Department Heads listed with their associated reports. Thank to Sharon Taratula and Sabrina Jackson for their assistance with the RFS Report. Also, thanks to Becky Schoenfeld, for reviewing the final document.

Final de WJ1B

This is my last COO Report. I began here at the ARRL in February 2005 after a 32-year career in cable television and broadcasting. It was an exciting opportunity for me to take the COO since I had been an active ham and a member of the ARRL since I was 14 years old. I always believed that my youthful interest in Amateur Radio was responsible for my choice of education and my successful career in communications.

Looking back, it has been a challenging, exciting, and fascinating, ten years. Some of the highlights were being one of the leaders of our Centennial Celebration in 2014. I also guided the ARRL's response to the Katrina tragedy in 2005 that moved forward our overall public service communications efforts. I also led the maddening launch of a new ARRL website. In recent years, I implemented the launch of Digital QST.

Looking towards the future, publishing and advertising, two of our mainstays, are going through major transitions. It will be an ongoing challenge for the ARRL to keep up with the sweeping changes in these areas. As more of our members interact with us through our website and social media, more focus will need to be paid to these areas as well. I believe that the Strategic Plan, that I helped create with the rest of the Strategic Planning Working Group, provides a solid blueprint for the ARRL's future. I hope that it will be successfully implemented in the coming years.

I have had a great staff here at the ARRL and I appreciate all of their knowledge and hard work that continues to make the ARRL a success. I have particularly enjoyed meeting thousands of ARRL members here at HQ and at the many hamfests and conventions that I have attended. So many of them have great stories to tell.

I am not leaving the ARRL entirely. I am still committed and enthusiastic about Amateur Radio and the ARRL. I am going to be the new editor of the Classic (formerly Vintage) Radio column in *QST*. I also intend to write a book or two for us in the next couple of years. I have been involved with the Historical Committee and I hope to continue working with them as well.

Lastly, I decided to re-visit the first COO Report that I submitted in July 2005. At that time I wrote,

“I was directed to address some specific strategic issues... These objectives were to improve staff morale and motivation, increase pride in our organization and physical work environment, improve staff skill levels, and begin transforming our workforce into a more team-based, member responsive organization. I also began the process of aligning our operational activities with our long-term strategies.”

I believe that, during the last 10 years, I have fulfilled these objectives.

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