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**Report of the President**

**ARRL Board of Directors**

# January 2024

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my pleasure to provide this Report to you as President. It continues to be a great honor to serve as an Officer of the League.

**Challenging and Important Decision**

I started my President’s Report last time with this topic. Given what has transpired since the July meeting, it’s appropriate to start this Report off with the same topic again.

The Board took on a huge challenge in July concerning the dues and print QST. The decisions made were not done in a hurried or haphazard way. There was substantial study done, strong discussions and debate held, and personal feelings conveyed about the issues. At least the Board didn’t kick the matter down the road like has been done in previous increases only to regrettably have to face the facts later on when the League was further in the hole. I commend the Board for stepping up in this regard.

As best I can recall, this is my third dues increase since I’ve been on the Board. Each one of them has been what I call gut-wrenching and hand wringing. Colleagues that preceded you on the Board went through the same uneasy and tentative emotions, and each time we received some negative feedback from our members. This time is no different except I think our members better understand and accept the dues increase itself (not the print QST issue) likely due to the inflationary time we are in and the length of time since the last increase.

The print QST issue was a huge decision for the Board. There’s no reason to doubt the need to have taken the step. A migration away from print QST had to be done and, like the dues increase, I commend the Board for taking this bold action and making such a difficult decision. However, the decision upset a number of our members and in particular those with term memberships who believe we have broken our word by not providing print QST through the remainder of their term membership.

For a member to say we broke our promise, our word, strikes deep in my heart. I have stood at the ARRL booths from one end of this nation to the other and talked to individuals about joining the League more than any other person on the Board. I have

persuaded them to join, to reup, to take the term membership, so I have strong personal feelings on the line. I have laid in bed at nights looking into the darkness wondering

about the decision we made in July, struggling with the decision and trying to reconcile our members’ belief that we have broken our word.

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I understand the financial justification concerning print QST for the term memberships, and I really appreciate the extensive analysis and projections the task force performed. I recognize the challenge our investment portfolio has to absorb losses and withdrawals yet still continue to fund operating deficits. In spite of that, I still wonder if there is not some way we can rectify the print QST issue for those members with a term membership without jeopardizing our future financial stability. I don’t have an answer other than paying up, bite the bullet, communicate with our members that we listened and have changed our mind, and then manage the financial impact going forward.

I know that to go back on our decision and provide print QST for those with term memberships would cause financial and administrative challenges, but I’ll make another impassioned plea for all of us to think hard whether there is any other alternative.

**Radio Amateurs of Canada**

I had the pleasure of attending the Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC) Biennial Planning Meeting in August. I appreciate RAC President Phil McBride, VA3QR, extending the invitation. Phil and I also teamed up for a segment in RAC’s virtual roundtable which was a huge success and with a number of positive comments about the League.

The international community looks to the ARRL for leadership worldwide. We should not underestimate the positive impact we have as a resource and a voice for Amateur Radio.

**FCC**

I was so pleased to see the FCC finally render a decision on the symbol rate petition. The beginning effort by ARRL actually began over 10 years ago by motion in the July 2013 Board meeting.

Counsel Siddall periodically reports to the Board on FCC matters. What we sometimes overlook is that we still have 12 items pending in Washington involving the FCC.

Now, if we could just get positive movement and NPRM’s issued for our petitions regarding the Technician Class privileges, RM-11828 from 2018, and the rebalancing of 80/75 Meters sub-bands, RM-11759 from 2016.

**Welcome**

I’d like to welcome our new Board member Roy Hook, W8REH, Vice Director for the Great Lakes Division. Welcome, Roy! We look forward to working with you. And welcome to Scott Yonally, N8SY, who moves to the Director seat for the Great Lakes Division.

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**Thank you**

I want to give a special thank you to my colleague Director Dale Williams, WA8EFK, for all of his years of service to the League and Amateur Radio. Dale and I go back a ways

and have worked on a lot of projects together. **Thank you, Dale**. We wish you all the best!

I want to thank you, the Board, for your dedication and hard work. The past months have not been easy, especially dealing with the emails and phone calls about the dues increase, print QST and other issues. **Thank you** for hanging in there, for caring, and for being there.

I also want to acknowledge the great work our Staff does for our members, for us on the Board, and for all of Amateur Radio. They’ve had a challenging time this year, too, but they have stood their watch with pride and a positive attitude, and when sometimes, I’m sure, the days seemed long. **THANK YOU!**

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Roderick - K5UR

President