**The Value of ARRL Membership**March 17, 2015

One of the most difficult decisions a membership organization faces is a dues increase. Both members and the organization want maximum value for a reasonable cost. ARRL is no different; for the last 101 years, we have used all of our skills, expertise and resources for the benefit of you, our members. ARRL membership supports the development, growth, and advocacy of the Amateur Radio Service in the US and worldwide.

**What We’ve Done to Cut Expenses.**

ARRL’s last dues increase was 2001. The majority of membership organizations, citing rising costs and slow recovery from an economic recession, have raised their dues in recent years; some have raised their dues multiple times. ARRL chose to postpone dues increases during this period, controlling spending and cutting costs. Since 2001, we have implemented many operating efficiencies that have contributed to reducing our staff at ARRL Headquarters by fifteen percent while either maintaining or expanding our level of service to you. We have developed additional giving opportunities, such as the Diamond Club, for those members with the means and desire to support ARRL beyond dues.

ARRL’s 2001 operating expenses were just over $13 million. In 2014, expenses were $15.5 million, an increase of just 19% over the past fourteen years, considerably less than the US rate of inflation from 2001 to 2014 (32%). A detailed explanation of ARRL’s budget and expenditures over these years is available in each year’s Annual Report. All reports since 2002 are available at **www.arrl.org/annual-reports**.

**Why a Dues Increase is Needed.**

As of 2015, the economic realities have caught up with us. While ARRL has done a good job of keeping our costs down internally and giving you the best services we can for your money, other factors are simply out of our control. A dues increase allows us to continue giving you the level of personal service you have come to expect from ARRL. Everyone’s costs have gone up in the last fourteen years. For ARRL, these include utilities, insurance, postage, and many others. We have done as much as we can to hold off a dues increase for over a decade, but now a dues increase is a necessity, not an option.

**Summary of ARRL Benefits**

**Long-Standing:**

*QST* Magazine, including trusted news, columns, and Product Reviews

E-newsletters, E-mail Forwarding Service ([YourCallSign@arrl.net](mailto:YourCallSign@arrl.net))

Advocacy to maintain meaningful access to the radio spectrum. Representation on regulatory issues at the international, federal, and state levels.

Technical Information Service and other ARRL Laboratory support services

Volunteer Examiner Coordinator Program

Ham Radio Equipment Insurance Plan

Outreach – Public Relations, Awareness in Media, and resources to promote Amateur Radio

Volunteer opportunities through the ARRL Field Organization

Radiosport: ARRL Contest and Awards programs, and QSL Service

**Benefits Added Since 2001**

Membership

Digital edition of *QST* and apps for viewing on iOS and Android devices

Searchable ARRL Periodicals Archive and Index

Expanded Product Reviews in *QST* and video product reviews

ARRL Publications for Kindle

Improved member interaction through social media

Online Exam Review: **www.arrl.org/examreview**

Logbook of The World (LoTW) ®

ARRL Centennial Celebration in 2014 (national and regional conventions, Centennial QSO Party, W1AW portable operations)

Preservation of ARRL and Amateur Radio history

Free License Renewal Assistance

Volunteer Examiner Honor Roll

New Affinity Benefits: group discount Home and Auto Insurance, ARRL Visa® Rewards Card

Public Service

Two Full-Time Staff – Liaison with National-Level Disaster Organizations

Ham Aid program

Emergency Communications Training Courses

ARES® E-Newsletter

Education

Education & Technology Program

Teachers Institute on Wireless Technology

Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS)

Advocacy

Responding to Antenna Restrictions – Amateur Radio Parity Act, Zoning Regulations

Relentless defense of our spectrum from commercial interests and against spectrum pollution

Improved awareness for Amateur Radio by increasing our liaison with Congress and Capitol Hill

Representation on national and international standards bodies

Technology

Improved ARRL Lab test procedures and test equipment that contribute to unbiased Product Reviews and advances in Amateur Radio equipment performance

**Long-Standing Benefits of ARRL Membership**

***QST***

*QST*, the official journal of ARRL, is repeatedly cited as the number one benefit of membership in ARRL. Since the first issue in December 1915, *QST* has kept all members informed of current Amateur Radio happenings, provides diverse technical instruction, and provides a platform for members to share the very best of our Amateur Radio Service. *QST* celebrates its Centennial year in 2015. It has the largest circulation of any Amateur Radio publication, reaching all 166,000 members each month.

***QST* Product Reviews**

In a recent survey, 82% of current ARRL members consider the unbiased product reviews and new product information in *QST* a primary benefit of membership, enabling them to make smarter, more informed purchasing decisions for Amateur Radio equipment.

**Advocacy**

ARRL has defended and expanded amateurs’ access to the radio spectrum through our work with the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) and International Telecommunication Union (ITU). We are vigilant representatives for the Amateur Radio community to Congress and the FCC.

Our efforts to disclose the serious interference potential of Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) and overcome prohibitive zoning ordinances are examples of our unwavering commitment to protect the Amateur Radio spectrum from commercial interests and interference.

Our Regulatory Information Branch answers member questions concerning FCC rules, operating practices and other regulatory queries. ARRL’s Volunteer Counsel and Volunteer Consulting Engineer programs open the door to assistance with antenna regulation and zoning issues. Because we devote resources to studying, testing, measuring, and documenting, ARRL can count many successes in defeating threats to Amateur Radio.

**Technical Information Service**

ARRL’s availability to help members with a technical question or problem is readily at hand. In addition to the information found in ARRL books such as *The ARRL Handbook,* *The ARRL Antenna Book*, ARRL License Manuals and many other publications, the staff of the ARRL Laboratory is a phone call or email away. ARRL Lab staff answers more than 4,000 direct requests from members for technical assistance each year.

**Outreach to Teachers and Schools**

Through the ARRL Teachers Institute on Wireless Technology and Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS), we showcase the value of using Amateur Radio to strengthen learning and inspire careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). ARRL’s Education and Technology Program provides grants for Amateur Radio stations and related resources for schools nationwide.

**Volunteer Examiner Coordinator**

The ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (VEC) administers 75% of all FCC Amateur Radio exams and maintains a high standard service and integrity among the more than 37,000 ARRL Volunteer Examiners. ARRL also helps you with acquiring club and special event call signs, and plays an active role in the creation and maintenance of the Amateur Radio exam question pools.

**ARRL.net Email Forwarding**

All members can establish an @arrl.net email forwarding address. Messages received by the forwarding service ([YourCallSign@arrl.net](mailto:YourCallSign@arrl.net)) are forwarded to the real e-mail address that you provide us. Over 70,000 ARRL members enjoy the convenience of this service.

**Radiosport: ARRL Contests and Awards**

ARRL contests and awards set the standard for encouraging on-air activity, improving operating skill and station performance, and tracking personal achievements. The DXCC, Worked All States and VHF-UHF Century Club (VUCC) Awards, combined with over fifteen competitive on-air events, guarantee the active radio amateur a lifetime of on-air enjoyment from 160 meters up to the microwave bands and amateur satellites. Members send their QSL cards overseas using one of the greatest bargains of ARRL membership, our Outgoing QSL Service — which processes about a million QSL cards each year.

**Benefits added since 2001:**

As the ARRL membership has grown over the years, so has the breadth and depth of the services we offer. Here is a list of ways ARRL has improved or increased value to its members in the last fourteen years:

**Membership**

**Digital *QST***

All members can access the enhanced digital edition of *QST* from a web browser — anywhere, and at any time. Apps are also available for iOS and Android devices.

**Searchable ARRL Periodicals Archive and Index**

The online availability of every issue of *QST* gives members access to the largest repository of Amateur Radio information and history in the world.

**Expanded Product Reviews in *QST* and Video Product Reviews**

Enjoy more detailed explanations and analysis of the latest Amateur Radio products. Our video product reviews shows you exactly how a product functions in the real world.

**Kindle Versions of ARRL Publications**

ARRL began introducing Kindle versions of our publications in 2007. You can expect more digital publications from ARRL in the years ahead.

**Improved and expanded member communication and information.**

Between the phone, email, a 24/7 answering service, our Facebook page, YouTube channel and Twitter feeds, there are more ways to interact with ARRL than ever before. And with ARRL’s social media, podcasts and e-mail newsletters and members-only online content at arrl.org, you can stay informed of all the ways ARRL is promoting and advocating for Amateur Radio and connect with other members worldwide.

**Logbook of The World (LoTW)®**

With over 660 million QSOs and more than 75,000 registered users, Logbook of The World is the premier electronic QSO confirmation system. Secure and accurate, LoTW helps you get official ARRL Awards like DXCC, Worked All States, Triple Play and VUCC on your wall faster and less expensively than paper QSLs alone.

**Members-only discounts on ARRL Publications and $10 Birthday Coupon.**

Members enjoy discounts and special promotions for many new ARRL books, and US members are mailed a $10 coupon each year in the month of their birthday.

**Centennial Celebration and Second Century Campaign**

In 2014, ARRL marked 100 years of members advancing the art and science of radio. Through the combined efforts of members and staff, the year-long Centennial celebration included successful national and six regional conventions, an extraordinary amount of on-the-air fun, and many other special commemorations. The Centennial QSO Party, and more than three million QSOs made with W1AW portable operations, represented an unprecedented commitment to invite every member to the celebration. The ARRL Endowment was strengthened by individual financial contributions to the Second Century Campaign. The spirit of these celebrations has reaffirmed that ARRL and the Amateur Radio Service are healthy as we move into our second century.

**Historical Committee and Preservation of History**

To envision where Amateur Radio is going, it is important to know where we came from. ARRL is preserving our history through the preservation of critical documents and equipment from Amateur Radio’s past. ARRL also collects oral histories and written memories of Amateur Radio operators around the world through the ARRL Library, a new online resource introduced this year.

**Volunteer Examiner Coordinator – Expanded Benefits**

Since 2003, the ARRL VEC program has helped members renew their licenses at no charge. Reminders are sent to members whose license will soon expire. Prospective examiners will find all of the resources and training they need to become an ARRL Volunteer Examiner online. Since 2007, the VEC Honor Roll program recognizes the most active Volunteer Examiners for their contributions.

**Member Affinity and Discount Programs**

For many years, the ARRL-sponsored Ham Radio Equipment Plan has offered members low-cost insurance coverage to protect you from loss or damage to your station, antennas, and mobile equipment. In recent years, ARRL has added additional affinity benefits including the ARRL Visa® Rewards Card, and group savings on home and auto insurance underwritten by Liberty Mutual. These affinity and discount programs provide members with convenience and savings that often far exceed annual dues.

**ARRL EXPO**

Over the last 10 years, ARRL has raised the level of its participation at national Amateur Radio events. The centerpiece of this effort has been ARRL EXPO, showcasing ARRL benefits, programs and services. This effort has provided members and prospective members with opportunities to interact, in-person, with ARRL staff, officials and key volunteers. ARRL EXPO has been held each year since 2005 as part of Dayton Hamvention®, and at ARRL National Conventions held in Alabama (2007), California (2012), and Connecticut (2014).

**Public Service**

**Liaison to National Disaster Organizations**

Two full-time staffers work closely with several served agencies, including FEMA, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army and the National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD). Active relationships with these national-level groups helps keep Amateur Radio’s emergency communications capabilities in their disaster response plans and significantly raises the visibility of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service®. ARRL has Memoranda of Agreement with these and other organizations.

**Ham Aid**

After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, ARRL launched the Ham Aid Fund, which puts Amateur Radio gear directly into the hands of the volunteers who need it to keep communications up and running in times of need. Ham Aid has provided assistance during several major emergencies, including Hurricane Gustav in 2008, the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, and the 2011 Alabama tornado outbreak.

**Emergency Communications Training Courses**

Since 2001, ARRL has provided training and education for ARES volunteers through the Introduction to Emergency Communications EC-001 course. Advanced training is available through the Pubic Service and Emergency Communications Management course. Our *Amateur Radio Public Service Handbook*, *Storm Spotting and Amateur Radio* book, and the ARES E-Letter are critical resources for any radio amateur dedicated to providing communications in times of need.

**Education**

**Education & Technology Program**

ARRL’s Education and Technology Program (ETP) works directly with teachers to promote Amateur Radio as an educational resource. ETP offers seminars for instructors to learn more about Amateur Radio’s ability to enrich curricula, awards grants to schools for Amateur Radio stations and accessories, and provides professional development to teachers nationwide.

**Teachers Institute on Wireless Technology**

ARRL brings teachers together for professional development seminars which introduce electronics, radio science, space communications, sensor technology, and basic robotics as tools to give their students a hands-on approach to developing wireless communication literacy. The TI focuses on Amateur Radio as a way to promote STEM topics (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) in their curricula. Over 650 instructors nationwide have benefitted from this program.

**Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) Program**

There is little that can compare with the thrill of seeing an auditorium of students talk in real time via Amateur Radio to an astronaut passing overhead in the International Space Station. ARISS evolved from the Shuttle Amateur Radio Experiment (SAREX) program. ARRL partners with NASA, the Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation (AMSAT) and radio amateurs across the country to put the magic of space communications and exploration directly into the hands of students.

**Advocacy**

**The Amateur Radio Parity Act**

For years, ARRL has worked to extend the PRB-1 protections for reasonable accommodation of Amateur Radio antennas to private land-use regulations, often known as Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&Rs). In 2014, ARRL succeeded in having the Amateur Radio Parity Act introduced in the US House of Representatives and gained the support of 69 co-sponsors. The Act, which has been re-introduced in the 114th Congress, would require reasonable accommodation of exterior antennas for amateurs who currently live in antenna-restricted communities.

**Spectrum Pollution**

Unintentional emitters in the radio spectrum create interference for radio amateurs. In recent years, ARRL has led the fight against the interference caused by these noise sources, such as Broadband over Power Lines (BPL), switching power supplies, grow light ballasts and power line noise. ARRL continues to appeal to the FCC for increased regulation and enforcement of the rules governing these emitters that pollute our bands.

**40 Meter Shortwave Broadcast Interference**

Through the International Telecommunication Union, ARRL worked with the IARU to remove shortwave broadcasters from 7100 to 7200 kHz, effective March 2009. Since that time, interference on the 40 meter amateur band has been significantly reduced.

**New Amateur Allocation on 60 Meters**

In 2003, the FCC approved ARRL’s request to grant US radio amateurs access to five distinct 60 meter channels. In 2012, the FCC responded to an ARRL request by granting amateurs more power and modes on 60 meters. ARRL and the IARU are working for an international 5 MHz allocation, which will be considered at the ITU World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-15), to be held in Geneva in November, 2015.

**Technology**

**Improvement of Transceiver Performance**

ARRL’s Laboratory continues to update its test procedures and equipment to reflect the state of the art. Our unbiased measurements and reports contribute to significantly improved transceiver performance in the marketplace.

**Representation on Standards Committees**

ARRL’s seat at the table on national and international standards committees keeps Amateur Radio issues at the forefront. ARRL is on the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) ASC C63® EMC committee, which is developing industry standards for immunity, emissions and testing of electronic devices. ARRL also has representation in the Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) EMC Society. We also have working relationships with several other standards groups throughout the world.

ARRL’s Electromagnetic Compatibility Committee (EMC) monitors developments in the EMC field and assesses their impact on the Amateur Radio Service. The Committee informs the ARRL Board of Directors about these activities and makes policy recommendations for further action, if appropriate.

**Conclusion**

As you discover new ways of learning, growing and having fun in Amateur Radio, you expect ARRL to be your source of information, programs and services covering the ever-expanding scope of Amateur Radio interests and activities. ARRL manages its resources judiciously and keeps costs as low as possible while maintaining a consistently high level of service for all members. Raising dues will ensure that high-quality programs and services will continue for all members as we provide a unified voice that protects and promotes ALL of Amateur Radio.