



## ARRL Northwestern Division Annual Report prepared for the Board of Directors Annual Meeting - 2023 Year in Review -

Respectfully submitted by: **Mike Ritz, W7VO, Director**

**Mark Tharp, KB7HDX, Vice Director**

### OVERVIEW:

This document contains highlights from administrative activities and associated accomplishments within the ARRL Northwestern (NW) Division for the year 2023. Included also within this document are additional reports from Director Ritz, Vice Director Tharp, most NW Division Section Managers (SM), and several of the NW Division Assistant Directors

### SYNOPSIS:

Geographically, the NW Division contains almost a million square miles of territory, with just under 12,000 ARRL members among over 74,000 amateur licensees. ARRL membership numbers within our Division year-over-year are down slightly, lower by just over 2%. This is comparable with many other ARRL Divisions. Of the 15 ARRL Divisions, the Northwestern Division ranks as the fourth largest, if measured by the number of ARRL members, behind the Southeastern and just below the Atlantic, and Roanoke Divisions.

Northwestern										
Section	Full Members	Associate Members	Full+ Associate	Foreign Members	Subs	Total	Oct 2023	Percent Change	Nov 2022	Percent Change
Alaska	542	39	581	0	0	581	580	+0.2	596	-2.5
Eastern Washington	933	37	970	0	0	970	976	-0.6	1,010	-4.0
Idaho	1,438	73	1,511	0	0	1,511	1,509	+0.1	1,499	+0.8
Montana	717	47	764	1	0	765	770	-0.6	764	+0.1
Oregon	3,257	158	3,415	1	0	3,416	3,418	-0.1	3,510	-2.7
Western Washington	4,430	218	4,648	0	0	4,648	4,672	-0.5	4,798	-3.1
<b>Total Northwestern Division</b>	<b>11,317</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>11,889</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11,891</b>	<b>11,925</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>12,177</b>	<b>-2.3</b>

## **DIVISION MEMBER COMMUNICATION CHANNELS:**

- To continue in our efforts to improve member communications and promote transparency, Vice Director Tharp and I jointly publish a regular NW Division Newsletter e-mail, sent to approximately 8,500 Division members that have opted-in via the ARRL website to receive them. These newsletters are usually at least four to five pages long. The focus is to not to just duplicate what the ARRL publishes in its bulletins but provide insight and background on what we both are accomplishing within the Board and provide the latest information on other ARRL and ARRL Foundation actions. Feedback received from members regarding our newsletter and its content continues to be overwhelmingly positive.
- In addition, Director Ritz authors an *ARRL Update* column for the large Salem, Oregon area ROADS radio club, for inclusion in their monthly newsletter.
- The total number of club virtual meetings held via the main NW Division Zoom account was 52 for 2023, down from around 89 in 2022. In addition to club meeting requests, the Division Zoom account was also used by the ARRL Foundation for quite a few Foundation scholarship interviews, the ARRL Programs and Services Committee, and Division and a Division cabinet meeting. The Zoom accounts have been a real asset within our Division.
- The Northwestern Division website, [www.arrlnwdiv.org](http://www.arrlnwdiv.org) has continued to attract registered members; we are well over 300 that have joined to website to participate in the forums. Our Facebook page, *Northwestern Division, ARRL*, and our Twitter feed @NWDIVARRL are used to re-post our newsletters, and re-distribute select ARRL posts.

## **Northwestern Division Director Report - Mike Ritz, W7VO**

Twenty-twenty-three was my fifth year as Northwestern Division Director, a job that is both enjoyable, and at times a real challenge. While the year beyond my ARRL responsibilities was also a challenge for me personally, I treasure the opportunity I have to serve the League and our members. I look forward to 2024.

### W7VO Highlights of the past year:

- As a member of both the ARRL Foundation's scholarship and grant committees, I was kept very busy with ARDC scholarship interviews throughout March and working on vetting other scholarship candidates into April. I also worked on vetting candidates for club and general grants sprinkled throughout the year.
- I attended quite a few Division club meeting meetings throughout the year via both Zoom and "live", providing both ARRL Update and technical education programs as requested. (Several technical education programs were also presented to clubs in other Divisions each month, always with the appropriate "Home Director" permission.)
- I'm very honored to have two articles I authored published in both QST and On the Air magazines in 2023, and one more that will be published in QST in February 2024
  - *The ARRL Clean Signal Initiative* (QST, June 2023)
  - *Maximizing Your Volunteers on the Air Experience* (On the Air, July/Aug 2023)
  - *Rewarding Excellence with ARRL Awards* (QST, February 2024)
- In January I prepared for and attended the ARRL Annual Board meeting in Windsor Locks, CT, and chaired the Programs and Services Committee meeting there.
- In April I attended the International DX Convention in Visalia, CA, and met with members in the ARRL booth there. Later that month I later hosted a meeting of the Programs and Services Committee via Zoom.
- In May I attended the Dayton Hamvention, where I spent time with staff in the ARRL Lab booth answering member questions regarding the new "Clean Signal Initiative" and in the Development booth promoting the ARRL Scholarship program.
- In June, I attended the ARRL NW Division Convention at SEA-PAC, where besides working the ARRL booth alongside our CEO David Minster and President Roderick, I was a featured speaker at both the Friday DX Workshop and provided an additional educational seminar on Saturday. I also hosted the ARRL Forum there.
- In July I prepared for and attended the summer ARRL Board meeting in Windsor Locks, CT, and chaired the Programs and Services Committee meeting.

- Due to a family illness, in August I was forced to miss the Pacific NW DX Convention in Vancouver, BC. Vice Director Tharp, KB7HDX and Eastern Washington Section Manager Jo Whitney, KA7LQJ both filled in and both did a great job representing the ARRL there.
- Not much ARRL activity in September and early October due to a scheduled surgery for me that had a long recovery period.
- In October I attended the Pacificon Pacific Division Convention in San Ramon, CA, where I worked the ARRL booth and provided attendees an educational seminar.

#### Other highlights:

- It was my pleasure to serve on several ARRL Board committees:
  - *Chair of the Programs and Services Committee*
  - *Member, HF Band Planning Committee*
  - *PSC Liaison, Clean Signal Initiative (CSI) Committee*
- In January I was re-elected by the Foundation Board as their Vice President during their January meeting and was an active member of both the Foundation's Scholarship and Grant Committees.

#### Expected Plans for 2024:

- Attend the January and July ARRL Board meetings, and other appropriate committee meetings as required throughout the year.
- In June will be the NW Division Convention at SEA-PAC, where I will be a seminar speaker on an educational topic still to be determined, and moderator for the ARRL Forum.
- In August I expect to attend the Pacific Northwest DX Convention, this year to be held in Seattle, WA. I expect there to be a DX/Contest Forum, and perhaps an ARRL forum there as well.
- In September I expect to attend the Spokane Hamfest, and Washington State Convention however there has been no formal announcement of that event. (It was canceled at the last minute in 2023 due to a conflict with the venue). I expect there will

be an ARRL Forum at that event hosted by myself and VD Tharp.

- Continuing as always between the large events are many Division radio club meetings. For 2024, I expect that while many clubs are continuing to migrate towards “live meetings”, most will continue to operate in a hybrid fashion with a combination of live and virtual meetings. I also expect to be conducting quite a few technical and ARRL informational seminars via Zoom, and also as “in-person” activities during the upcoming year.

At this point I have no idea which ARRL committees I will be assigned to by President Roderick for 2024 but expect not much to change from previous years.

And of course, there is all the ARRL Foundation work to look forward to, as one of the few Foundation Board members that are on both the Grant and Scholarship committees.

### **Final thoughts**

I would like to take this time to thank Vice Director Tharp for the great service he continues to provide our Division and thank him for serving as my “right-hand-man” while I was busy recovering from my surgery in September and into October. Within the vast NW Division, he covers the bases I simply can’t, and as we work as a team his knowledge as a long time Division Section manager and Board watcher is an invaluable asset. The ARRL is lucky to have him on-board and part of “the team”.

I also want to thank our NW Division Section Managers and their appointees, whose tireless devotion to promoting the ARRL mission does not go unnoticed.

In closing, I have just under one year left on my current term as an ARRL Director, and do not anticipate at this point seeking re-election in November. My memories as a member of the ARRL team and my opportunity to serve the Northwestern Division will be cherished.

## Northwestern Division Vice Director Report – Mark Tharp, KB7HDX

Another year has passed us by in the blink of an eye and I am honored to continue serving members in the Northwestern Division as Vice Director.

This year, after the last three, finally felt normal in respect to Amateur Radio events. Most of the hamfests and conventions were back to running full steam ahead. Sadly, one or two did meet their demise during the “Covid years” and hopefully they can get back on their feet in 2024.

I was fortunate to attend the following events in 2024.

Mike and Key Swap meet, YRC swap in Union Gap, SEA-PAC Division convention, Wenatchee Hamfest, PNW DX Convention up north in BC. Fairbanks Hamfest in Alaska, and Swaptoberfest in Rickreall Or.

The Spokane Hamfest was scrubbed last minute by the school for a “student activity” and the PNW VHF Conference did not take place this year.

If I had to name one good thing to come out of “the Covid years” it was clubs embracing the ZOOM platform and continuing to use it for hybrid meetings. This has allowed both Mike and I to join in with many clubs across the Division. Some groups have just stayed on ZOOM with only a few in person gatherings during the year. From what I hear club attendance is up within those groups holding hybrid meetings.

I continue to serve on the ECFSC committee which meets monthly working on a varied list of topics having to do with the ARRL Field service, and Emergency communications.

I also served again on the Legal Defense and support committee however I do not believe we had a single meeting this year. It exists not to necessarily get involved with individual antenna issues, but topics broader such as hands-free laws, or tower painting legislation.

During the spring I was honored to assist again with the ARRL and ARDC scholarship process. This is a huge time commitment but well worth it at the end and I am looking forward to helping again in 2024.

Dues dues and QST..... most of the member interaction the second half of the year had to do with the separation of the printed QST from membership. Most folks were understanding about the dues increase, seeing how it has been many years since the last increase, but I think I received more comments in the last five months about QST than all the other comments during the past five years. The January BOD meeting will include discussion on this topic specifically because of member comments.

Division stats:

At the end of November our division had 11,891 members which is down 2.3% from November 2022 where we had 12,177. The NW Division is still holding at the fourth largest in the league by membership behind the Southeastern Division with 14,976, Roanoke with 12,406 and Atlantic with 12,124. Overall, across all the Divisions membership is up and down and it varies each month as memberships are not due at the first of the year.

## **Northwestern Division Section Manager Reports:**

### **Alaska Section - David Stevens, KL7EB**

Another year is gone, COVID is winding down, but RSV is up. The clubs are back to Hybrid meetings, In person and Zoom. Anchorage Amateur Radio Club, joined Arctic Amateur Radio Club, MARA, and Juneau Amateur Radio Club with Hybrid meetings. Anchorage Amateur Radio Club has added in person testing to their schedule. With being stuck at home, I want to congratulate four Alaskan hams this year who finished joining the Honor Roll of 330 countries worked. KL7TC, KL7S, and others. Arctic Amateur Radio Club is planning on hosting an ARRL state convention 2025. Sadly with ageing Ham community, we have lost many more to SK society, AL7AQ, AL2R, KL7KW, and many more. These active hams were club officers and presidents. We need new hams to step us to fill club offices. Moosehorn Amateur Radio Club in Kenai, and Arctic Amateur Radio Club in Fairbanks both had Ham fest this year. KL7TC and group in Wasilla this spring, and AARC in Anchorage this fall ran the VOTA.

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### **Eastern Washington Section - Jo Whitney, KAJLQ**

EWA is comprised of 20 counties divided into 3 regions, all located east of the Cascade Mountains. The county populations vary from 2,363 to 549,690 persons. That variation is reflected in the number of licensed amateurs in the counties.

As of November 2023, ARRL Northwestern Division, EWA Section has 933 Full memberships, 37 Associate members for a total of 970. In November 2022 there were 1010 ARRL members, a loss of 4% over the year. Many factors have contributed to this.

My work for the ARRL in the past year included:

- March - Setting up and supporting the ARRL booth at the Mike and Key ARC Electronics Swap meet in Puyallup for WWA SM with NWVD

- May – ARRL SM presence at the N7YRC Tailgate Swap meet in Yakima
- June – attended NW Division Convention SeaPac in Seaside OR. For that event I volunteered hours to support their event.
- June - ARRL SM presence at the Apple City ARC Hamfest in Wenatchee with NWVD
- June – 2023 Field Day site tour to 5 locations in 4 counties (Kittitas, Douglas, Grant, Adams) spending 12 hours on the road travelling 353 miles. Locations were chosen based on posting their location with ARRL. Each site was given ARRL information and books. At a single person operation in a State Park in Douglas, a future contact and coordination was made for materials to a booth focusing on amateur radio at the NCW Tech & STEM showcase in Waterville.
- September – met SEC Frank Hutchison AG7QP for an impromptu “Hotdog Hamfest” in Moses Lake
- September – planned on setting up and supporting the ARRL booth at the Washington State Convention in Spokane with NWVD; however, it was cancelled due to a last-minute loss of venue.
- October – Set up and supported the new OR SM at the “Swaptoberfest” in Rickreall OR with NWVD.
- October – Late notice of event/not invited, but thought about attending the Walla Walla Valley ARC W7DP Tailgate Party
- December – devoted time on the air to give out VOTA points on 12/17 (399 contacts in a 4-hour run) and 12/31/2023 (195 contacts in 3hrs). The “Red Badges OTA” and “Badges OTA” were the driving factors.

I signed up new members and accepted renewal notices for ARRL members in Puyallup – most of them were for WWA. At Spokane would have been the other opportunity for new/renewal memberships – that was a missed opportunity as well as going to the W7DP gathering.

Although I travel with Mark KB7HDX NWVD, he and I both contribute materials to events we attend. Books, swag, flyers/handouts are supplied.

I have 5 named ASMs: Kelly Blackmon NA5XX, Richard Edwards W7RHE, Charles Williams KI7DG, Mary Wiese AA7RT and John Orella KL7LL. Their role is to send greetings and local info to new hams. They should have had support for postage, but I did not get requests.



I have a named ACC Harold Hepner AD7QJ; however, he admits he is unable and unwilling to fulfil the roles of the position. The ARRL CLUB database lists 19 affiliated clubs in EWA. I will take on the role of the ACC to contact the clubs to update with the ARRL. It will be good to have some contact with them as travel to their meetings is not always reasonable. I am aware of two amateur radio clubs not affiliated but wanting to be.

What do I want to accomplish in 2024?

1) Increase membership: I look at the new ham list in EWA each month. I have neglected to look at or appreciate the New ARRL member list, the list of Renewal of ARRL memberships and finally, the list of Lapsed ARRL memberships.

I will contact these members by email to thank them for their new or renewal memberships and provide my contact information. I will also contact the lapsed members (they show up on the list 2 months after expiration) to see if they had a specific reason for not renewing or if I can answer any questions. To accomplish this, I would like to how often does the ARRL email reminders re: membership? I would not want to duplicate or flood emails.

Is there any suggested verbiage for contacting members with lapsed memberships?

2) Attend member events – Hamfest, conventions, meetings. I know of the primary Hamfests from published listings. Contacting the clubs for updates, I hope for invitation to meet and greet.

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### **Report from EWA Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) Frank Hutchinson AG7QP**

In 2023, Frank took on the SEC role as it is outlined in the job description. The focus in 2023 was to seek and find an Emergency Coordinator (EC) in each of the 20 counties in EWA. There are 2 District Emergency Coordinators (DEC) for the 3 Districts; one was lost to a move to WWA. There are 3 ECs taking lead of combined counties – Benton/Franklin, Chelan/Douglas, and Walla Walla/Columbia.

Frank went to club/ARES group meetings in College Place (Walla Walla), Twisp (Okanogan), Cusick (Pend Orielle), and Colville (Stevens). Four counties have no ARES organization (Adams, Asotin, Columbia, and Garfield). He had meetings with the Emergency Management Director for Columbia County EMD and the EC for Walla Walla County to discuss how the two counties could work together for amateur radio support. He met with the EM of Yakima and Grant.

Working toward a coordinated EWA ARES/EmComm response with growth in skills desired by their served agencies, he planned and coordinated a WSDOT exercise in April to relay prepared road and bridge damage assessments via voice and Winlink to/from EOCs and field locations. In

October, he planned the SET with good response. Teams were tested for equipment, location and communication ability.

Frank's travel expenses were submitted for reimbursement from the EWA budget, with gladness for his efforts. Frank is already working on another EWA exercise with WSDOT.

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## Idaho Section - Dan Marler, K7REX

Thanks to the efforts and hard work of Mike Brown, N7ID, Idaho ARRL ASM/SGL, Don Lynn, ND7L Idaho ASM, Chris Clement, WH6CPT, Brandon Mitchell, WA7DVR, and Mike Neelon, we now have a newly redesigned Idaho Amateur Radio license plate approved by Idaho's legislation. <https://legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2023/legislation/H0107/>



## Idaho ARES Report by Don Gardner, W7PJ, Idaho SEC

Idaho Winlink net for the year of 2023

112 participants with 2,062 check-ins for the year; each month, we have different assignments for checking in such as using different ICS and Winlink forms.

<https://winlinkofidaho.blogspot.com/>

As ASEC and SEC I traveled to other clubs to provide them with ideas and tools to use during an emergency. In February, I met almost all the Emergency Managers of the state to share what Amateur Radio Operators can provide during a disaster, and then in October, I again presented tools that Amateur Radio can bring to an event.

During 2023, many Amateur Radio Operators provided communications throughout the state for boat races, bike races, triathlons, etc.,

Our ARRL Idaho ARES website is maintained by Ray Montagne, W7CIA

<http://www.idahoares.info/>

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### **Idaho ARRL Report by Don Lynn, ND7L, Idaho ASM**

Our Idaho ARRL All Hands Hams Idaho group is a monthly online session reaching our ARRL members but is open to all amateurs in Idaho. It also features a regular slotted "about us" presentation from one of clubs in the session and an occasional training session. Materials and sessions are recorded and made available to all our Idaho hams.

Section ARRL staff provides a monthly readout from the HQ Section Manager's meeting directly to the All Hands Hams Idaho group. Featuring:

- Latest Section News (sharable) from ARRL HQ
- Club Grant program/status
- Current Legislation / Action to take
- VOTA
- Opportunity to ask the section leadership any questions

### **VOTA**

- Idaho had two sessions:
  - March 8-14 with 12 operators
  - August 23-29 with 10 operators
  - 8405 combined contacts were made
  - Kept VOTA in the limelight with the clubs in the Idaho Section.

### **Idaho Club Highlights 2023: by Richard Casper, WB7ML – Idaho ACC**

- 2 new/renewed ARRL Affiliated Clubs
- 2 Special Service Club renewals
- All ARRL Affiliated Clubs have current information

Nearly all clubs grew new memberships, and the community outreach was tremendous all year. Field Day was very well represented and presented to communities in Idaho by our clubs.

There was great interaction and association of clubs to help support several activities in the state, including:

- Idaho Sled Dog Challenge
- Idaho QSO Party
- Jet Boat Races (3)
- Marathons (3)
- Trail Runs (2)
- Bicycle Races
- The 2023 Eclipse

Kelly Klaas, K7SU, Idaho ASM maintains our ARRL Idaho website

<https://idahoarrl.info/index.html>

Website use video: <https://youtu.be/XnxWRBycmEO>

Idaho ARRL All Hams Newsletter: Polly Smith, KG7DPO - Idaho PIO

#### **IDAHO ARRL LEADERSHIP CONTACTS:**

- Idaho ARRL Section Manager: Dan Marler, K7REX [arrl.idaho@gmail.com](mailto:arrl.idaho@gmail.com)
- Idaho Assistant Section Managers (ASM)
- Butch Hoseley, KD7RMB Elmore County [kd7rmb@yahoo.com](mailto:kd7rmb@yahoo.com)
- Rob Blout KA7ERV, Boise/Valley County [ka7erv@arrl.net](mailto:ka7erv@arrl.net)
- Kelly Klaas K7SU, Twin Falls [kelly@K7SU.com](mailto:kelly@K7SU.com)
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- Doug Nielson N7DN, Idaho Falls [n7dn@arrl.net](mailto:n7dn@arrl.net)
- Mike Brown, N7ID, Moscow/Troy area [n7id@arrl.net](mailto:n7id@arrl.net)
- John Ailport, K7BSV, Sandpont [john.ailport13@gmail.com](mailto:john.ailport13@gmail.com)

#### **Idaho Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC)**

- Don Gardner, W7PJ [W7PJ@parnasas.com](mailto:W7PJ@parnasas.com)

#### **Idaho Assistant Section Emergency Coordinator (ASEC)**

- Rob Blout, KA7ERV [ka7erv@gmail.com](mailto:ka7erv@gmail.com)

#### **Idaho ARRL Affiliated Club Coordinator (ACC)**

- Rich Casper, WB7ML [idahoanghost@gmail.com](mailto:idahoanghost@gmail.com)

### **Idaho ARRL Public Information Officer (PIO)**

- Polly Smith, KG7DPO [KG7DPO@gmail.com](mailto:KG7DPO@gmail.com)

### **Idaho ARRL Technical Specialist (TS)**

- Rick Briggs, KL7BR [kl7br@yahoo.com](mailto:kl7br@yahoo.com)

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## **Montana Section – Kevin Kerr, W1KGK**

### **Montana ARES Report**

Winlink net for the year of 2024

- Going to set up a weekly Winlink net for check ins for points and recognition for Montana Section!
- Will host a Winlink server for Montana on HF, VHF, UHF and other modes.

### **Montana ARRL Report**

Our Montana ARRL All Hams group is a monthly online session reaching our ARRL members but is open to all amateurs in Montana. It also features a regular slotted "about us" presentation from one of clubs in the session and an occasional training session. Materials and sessions are recorded and made available to all our Montana hams.

Section ARRL staff provides a monthly readout from the HQ Section Manager's meeting directly to the All Hams in Montana group. Featuring:

- Latest Section News (sharable) from ARRL HQ
- Club Grant program/status
- Current Legislation / Action to take
- VOTA
- Opportunity to ask the section leadership any questions

66 New Hams for Montana from July to December 2023

27 Upgrade Hams for Montana from July to December 2023

30 New Montana Hams Joined ARRL July to December 2023

24 Montana Hams rejoined ARRL July to December 2023

### **VOTA recap by Mel, KJ9C:**

- Montana had two sessions:
  - May 10th-- 17th with 25 operators
  - December 12-19 with 15 operators
  - 11,000 combined contacts were made
  - Kept VOTA in the limelight with the clubs in the Montana Section.

Here's the summary of our W1AW/7 effort. Every QSO counted toward exceeding 5000 QSOs in just one week.

We had 15 operators, and I thank each of you for getting your logs to me as fast as you did.

The summary below recaps every log.... total QSOs per operator and bands/modes worked. Montana made over 6000 contacts in May, so our total is over 11,000. Not bad at all!

Our combined log is now at ARRL and should be on Logbook of the World within a week or two.

It's hard to get inspired to radio with Christmas around the corner.... congratulations for pitching in. Thanks to Tom KOSN for creating our signup sheet. Much easier to use than the ARRL version.

### **Montana Club Highlights 2023:**

2 new/renewed ARRL Affiliated Clubs

ARRL Affiliated Clubs have current information or updating as of this letter

There was great interaction and association of clubs to help support several activities in the state, including:

- Marathons (3)
- Trail Runs (2)
- Bicycle Races

### **Montana ARRL LEADERSHIP CONTACTS:**

- Montana ARRL Section Manager: Kevin Kerr, W1KGK
- Montana Assistant Section Managers (ASM) Doug Mason W7MRC
- Montana ARRL Affiliated Club Coordinator (ACC) Ronnie Woods AI7DK

### Montana ARRL Technical Specialist (TS)

- Bruce Clark KA2ODP
- Donald Heide W7MRI
- Neil Ramhorst KL7JGS
- Jeffery Stidham AL1Q

## Oregon Section – Scott Rosenfeld, N7JI

### Overview

Oregon includes thirty-six counties, which are divided into six districts for the sake of ARES. Oregon's counties range from urban to suburban to rural to very sparsely populated. County populations vary from 1,400 to over 800,000, and the number of licensed amateurs in each varies just as widely.

In November 2023, the Oregon section had:

3,257 Full ARRL members

158 Associate ARRL members

1 Foreign ARRL member

for a total of 3,416 ARRL members. This number fell 3% from the November 2022 membership tally.

The Oregon section has faced challenges for years. These challenges will not be discussed here. This report instead highlights what the Oregon section has achieved since July 2023. From June through November, 288 new hams were licensed in Oregon; it is also quite startling to see how many licenses lapse every month.

It is important for every member of the ARRL Oregon section Field Services organization to remember that we are here to deliver ARRL services to Oregon's ARRL members, and to function as an interface between the Oregon's ARRL members and the national organization.

### Timeline of significant SM events of 2023

In July, David Kidd, KA7OZO, resigned as Section Manager.

Jon Wanzer, KK6GXG, was appointed as Section Manager.

In August, Jon resigned as Section Manager.

In September, Scott Rosenfeld, N7JI, was appointed as Section Manager.

The transition from Jon Wanzer to Scott Rosenfeld involved discussions regarding Jon's plans to rebuild the Oregon section's field services group, in which many important appointed positions were vacant. Jon simply had not had enough time to start the rebuilding process. I had discussions with Jon, Mike Ritz, and Mike Walters in August to establish a priorities list.

We closely examined that Oregon section Field Service appointments database and found numerous issues. Some appointments had not been updated since the 1990s. One appointee had passed away and been replaced without any database updates. Some appointees had been performing roles for which their appointments had never been recorded.

### **Item #1 - Rebuilding ARES / Emcomm**

The item atop the list was to begin rebuilding the presence of Oregon ARES.

A considerable number of individuals and served agencies had grown weary of working within ARES over the past few years (see above) but were still interested in Emcomm. This led to grassroots organizations providing Emcomm services to local agencies, including ARES, AUXCOMM, ACES, SHARES, and other groups, leading to the creation of a fractured section Emcomm structure. It is also true, however, that ARRL ARES is now under new management that is far more flexible and easier to work with, with the understanding that anyone providing communications in emergencies can learn to work with other groups and can be an important part of the overall emergency response.

I had discussions with Doug Jimenez, W7DMJ, Communications Director at OEM, during which he expressed his willingness to work with a reconstituted and reinvigorated ARES program. He showed a desire to implement an agnostic Emcomm system that encourages and invites participation by all groups. ARRL's ARES coordinator, Josh Johnston, KE5MHV, agreed that ARES can serve as a single point of contact for OEM, encouraging engagement between ARES and non-ARES groups, and including them as part of a statewide Emcomm umbrella. We held a Zoom meeting attended by over thirty amateurs who had experience with a variety of Emcomm programs in Oregon, including those utilizing FRS and GMRS.

Doug and I agreed on Bonnie Altus, AB7ZQ, as Oregon's new SEC. Bonnie and I agreed on appointments of five ASECs with expertise in Emcomm training, emergency tests, planning, interoperability, Winlink, and other disciplines. We have filled five of Oregon's six DECs positions, and are working on plans for two SETs per year, coordinating efforts with OEM, and running a mailing list for those who oversee their Emcomm-related units, independent of the name and affiliation of their organization. We have been reaching out to leaders of both ARES and non-ARES groups to join this list. Several have joined and will be taking part in upcoming SETs.



The following is our list of Oregon district and section level Emcomm appointees as of December 2023:

- SEC – Bonnie Altus, AB7ZQ
- ASEC - Mitch Bayersdorfer, W7MDB
- ASEC - Thomas Noel, KF7RSF
- ASEC - Larry Clark, N7LJC
- ASEC - Ed Bodenlos, W7EWB
- ASEC - Pat Roberson, W7PAT
- D1 EC - Kurt Roth, W9ERT
- D2 EC - vacant (Bend / Redmond / Prineville)
- D3 EC - Stuart Bottom, K7FG
- D4 EC - Steve Duck, KW7S
- D5 EC - George Roth, KE7MVX
- D6 EC - Cyndi Albro, KK7AZD

## **Item #2 - Affiliated Clubs**

When Bonnie, AB7ZQ, was appointed as SEC, she resigned from the ACC position. In December, Max Sabo, K7MAX, VP of the Portland Amateur Radio Club, became the new ACC. The Oregon section has 46 ARRL-affiliated clubs that are “active,” three of which have earned the distinction of being a Special Service Club (SSC).

Max, Bonnie, and I met to discuss the merging of spreadsheets created over the past 5 years. Max now has a good handle on the tasks and responsibilities associated with the ACC position.

We are encouraging particularly active clubs with a wide array of programs to apply for SSC status. The Radio Amateurs of the Gorge (RAGS) club in Hood River applied for and received SSC status in December 2023.

Many Oregon radio clubs provide communications for events, such as parades, road races, trail runs, and mountain bike races. This very public outreach provides excellent service for the

groups our clubs serve, and excellent visibility for our clubs, which in turn can allow a club to recruit new members and populate its classes with students.

A sizable number of Oregon radio clubs also sponsor VE exams, providing additional services to the public, enhancing the visibility of our clubs and of ham radio, and helping to grow the ranks of amateur radio operators.

### **Item #3 - Educational Activities**

Ham radio is a powerful teaching tool for STEM, and have made this a central focus of my ham radio life for many years, introducing demonstrating ham radio in schools, promoting the formation and growth of school clubs, becoming a Scouting merit badge counselor, teaching over 35 in-person and Zoom-based licensing classes, and creating a teaching station at the Eugene Science Center. I have also co-written three successful ARDC grant proposals focusing on ham radio as STEM education and am happy to help others in writing such proposals.

Oregon has two SYCs, Frank Gruber, KB7NJV, and Russ Mickiewicz, N7QR. Frank focuses on introducing ham radio in schools, while Russ focuses on Scouting. At a meeting with Russ, Frank, and new ACC K7MAX, Russ and Frank noted that they do not really coordinate very much, instead working directly with youngsters. They proposed that clubs should name youth coordinators, with Russ and Frank coordinating their outreach efforts. We look forward to proposing this program in 2024, with a corresponding increase in the number of ham radio clubs in schools and museums around the state, and greater numbers of Oregon students and Scouts becoming licensed.

In November, the Valley Radio Club (Eugene), Salem Amateur Radio Club, and Ducks on the Air Radio Club (University of Oregon) cooperated to present ham radio to a crowd of 1,600, including 800+ Girl Scouts, at a STEM fair at the Oregon State Fairgrounds.

In November, the Valley Radio Club (Eugene) began working with the Eugene YMCA on the inclusion of ham radio as part of the STEM education program being implemented at the newly constructed YMCA building. Many attendees took part in on-air contacts during these events.

On May 4th, 2024, the Scout Pacific Trail district will be having their district Camporee at the elk preserve at Beneke Creek just up the road from Jewel, and there will be a radio component to the event, with a plan to run about 150 scouts through a demonstration station, one patrol at a time. This usually occurs 1-2 times per year.

Every Sunday at 4:30 PM local, there is a Cascade Pacific scouts round table net on the K7RPT repeater system in the Portland metro area. K7RPT links their repeaters and activates IRLP and Echolink for the net.

The University of Oregon Radio Club, N7DUX, became an officially recognized student club, as well as gaining ARRL affiliation. Now being able to take part in official events, student membership grew from 7 to 20 through exposure received at the annual “Flock Party” event.

Oregon State University’s ARRL-affiliated Club, W7OSU saw the graduation of its president, and has worked on making access to HF radio available via the internet for its members via a networked Flex radio.

Portland State University’s radio club, PSAS, continues to build and launch Amateur Radio Satellites, supplying a remarkable opportunity for its members to develop invaluable skills. See <https://www.pdxaerospace.org/>.

A new radio club formed at Southern Oregon University in Ashland.

#### **Item #4 - Technical Services**

At a recent club meeting, I asked, “how many people know that the ARRL Oregon Section has a bunch of technical specialists that are there to help ARRL members with technical issues?”

Only a handful of the 70+ people at the club meeting said that they did, a sure sign of lack of publicity.

At a December meeting with Ron Fial, KO7V (TC), Dave Cole, NK7Z (TS), and Thomas Noel, KF7RSF (TS), the consensus was that few ARRL Oregon section members know that this service exists.

We are actively seeking new technical specialists with expertise in a wide array of disciplines.

Ron happily agreed to oversee growth of the TS group.

We created a technical group mailing list using groups.io, called ARRL OREGON TECHNICAL GROUP, that we publicized via a section manager email. Within two days, over 50 Oregon hams had signed up to the mailing list, and multiple discussion topics had been raised.

We look forward to increasing our TS ranks and continuing growth of the technical mailing list in the coming year.

#### **Item #5 - Volunteer Counsel**

In 2023, Mike Ritz noted that both Oregon VCs were no longer functioning as VCs. I sent out an email request for attorneys who practice in Oregon, are licensed amateurs, and are ARRL members.

To date, we have received an application from one qualified applicant, and we continue to look for more.

### **Item #6 - Traffic Management**

Oregon STM David Bogner, W7EES, and NM Carl Clawson, WS7L, are deeply involved in Oregon's traffic handling programs, and we met to discuss the state of traffic handling in the section. CW nets are shrinking in number, participation, and volume of traffic other than "congrats on passing your exam." Oregon's phone- and CW-based traffic nets have issues with the willingness of many operators to handle traffic, resulting in a sizable proportion of traffic being handled by a small group.

Added to the above is a feeling that ARRL has abandoned traffic handlers and nets through the elimination of traffic handling notices and publicity in QST.

We discussed these issues with Fred Kemmerer, AB1OC, and attended a meeting with Phil Temples, K9HI, and Marcia Forde, KW1U, to discuss recruitment, retention, training, exercises, and the future of traffic handling.

We have also discussed the fact that traffic handling and Emcomm functions may sometimes overlap, although there are significant issues using Winlink forms to inject messages into the traffic handling system, leading to friction, confusion, and lost traffic.

We hope that 2024 will bring improvements to recruitment of new traffic handling operators, better understanding of the uses and functionality of traffic handling, and reinvigorated publicity from ARRL.

There are numerous phone nets in Oregon that, while not traffic handling nets, can serve as training grounds for new traffic handlers by using "practice messages" that can be handled and delivered as fun exercises.

We also hope to increase the number of Net Managers (NMs) within the section.

### **Item #7 - Other Appointees**

Russ Garrett, KD7MPK, will remain ASM within the Oregon section.

Kevin Curry, KA7KYQ, will remain our Oregon State Government Liaison.

### **Section Manager Event Participation**

- June - Before becoming SM, Scott N7JI, arranged a joint effort between the OSU, UO, and PSU radio clubs to present a united front in representing ARRL's Collegiate Amateur Radio Project (CARP) at SeaPac.

- September – ARRL SM presence at High Desert hamfest in Redmond, OR.
- October – ARRL SM presence at Swaptoberfest in Rickreall, OR.
- December – ARRL SM presence at Peak Radio Association club dinner meeting in Corvallis, OR.
- December – ARRL SM presence at Willamette Valley DX Club meeting in Portland, OR.
- VOTA – Made nearly 2,000 QSOs qualifying for 2-way VOTA QSOs, including participation in Red Badge days.

### **W1AW/7 & VOTA**

- Oregon was W1AW/7 twice in 2023 as part of VOTA. Bob, W7YAQ, coordinated operations during Oregon’s first week (over 10,000 QSOs), and Scott, N7JI, coordinated operations during Oregon’s second week (about 6,600 QSOs). Well over 50 Oregon ham radio operators handed out W1AW/7 QSOs.

### **2024 and Beyond**

I read the new ham list for Oregon each month. I plan to start sending out “welcome to ham radio” notes to every new ham in the Oregon section, introducing them and welcoming them to join ARRL, and urging them to find and join their local radio clubs.

I have mentioned to members receiving my section news emails that every ham in Oregon knows at least one other ham who is not a member of ARRL. I have minimal ability to convince anyone to join ARRL through my SM emails, as everyone on the list is already an ARRL member. However, a recommendation from an ARRL member who is a friend has added weight, and there are over 14,000 non-member hams in the section.

I believe that outreach by ARRL members is the most significant activity needed for our section to increase its membership. There are many reasons to join ARRL, and our members need to convey that to non-members.

Although there are about 3,500 ARRL members in the Oregon section, my SM emails reach only 2,000 ARRL of those people. During our traffic handling meeting, I noticed that ARRL has an “opt-in” list for emails, evidenced by the fact that I personally had never seen the NTS newsletter. I thus estimate that 1,500 ARRL Oregon members do not receive my SM emails. I will encourage those who do receive SM emails to ask their friends if they receive these emails, and encourage them to opt-in.

There are many other ARRL products that arrive in the form of emails. I discovered that I had not opted in for many of them (and remedied the situation). I will recommend that Oregon ARRL members review their opt-in choices via the ARRL website.

I plan to continue attending conventions and hamfests, and have contacted Oregon's ARRL-affiliated clubs (as far as email permits) to offer visits to club meetings and events, either in-person (when practical) or remotely. I always supply SWAG in the form of pens, stickers, books, and the like, when visiting clubs, including mailing books to those who may win raffles when I visit remotely.

I will encourage other appointees within the section to make in-person visits (when appropriate). Every appointee should also look for those who could serve as his or her replacement in the interest of seamless transitions and continuity within the section's Field Service organization.

We have a section website, [arrloregon.org](http://arrloregon.org), which we use to disseminate information specific to Oregon.

Oregon also has a rapidly growing AREDN presence, linking areas of the state together with a high-bandwidth, radio-based data network. We must support continued growth of this system, as it can serve as a high-speed information backbone in times of emergency.

Ham radio operators live in every Oregon county, but counties with small populations usually have small numbers of amateur radio operators, making it difficult to provide Emcomm support to served agencies in these counties. It may be necessary to have individual groups serve agencies in multiple sparsely populated counties in such areas. We are in frequent contact with the ARRL ARES group and look forward to the release of new training materials.

I appreciate your support and faith in my abilities to carry out the duties of this position. Please let me know if you have any questions, comments, or complaints.

# 2023 Annual Report to the Northwest Division Director



Western Washington



Section

Proud to be a part of the  
Northwestern Division

## Section Management Team



SECTION MANAGER  
**Monte L. Simpson W7FF**  
W7FF@arrl.org



ASSISTANT SECTION MANAGER  
**Steve Aberle WA7PTM**  
WA7PTM@arrl.net



ASSISTANT SECTION MANAGER  
**Scott R. Douglas W7XC**  
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STATE GOVERNMENT LIAISON  
**Lee A. Chambers KI7SS**  
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SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR  
**Frank Wolfe NM7R**  
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SECTION YOUTH COORDINATOR  
**Delvin R. Bunton NS7U**  
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AFFILIATED CLUB COORDINATOR  
**Lynn A. Burlingame N7CFO**  
N7CFO@arrl.net



SECTION TRAFFIC MANAGER  
**George A. Stone AC7AI**



ASSISTANT SECTION MANAGER  
**Robert M. Purdom AD7LJ**  
AD7LJ@arrl.net



ASSISTANT SECTION MANAGER  
**Douglas Thomas Grover N7POV**



TECHNICAL COORDINATOR  
**Tom Herman N1BEC**  
n1bec@msn.com



## Section ARRL Membership Data

**Top five ARRL sections for membership:**

1. Ohio, 5,632
2. South Texas, 5,036
3. Virginia, 4,839
- 4. Western Washington, 4,648**
5. North Carolina, 4,500

**Western Washington Section membership**

**2023:** 4,648    **2022:** 4,798    **-150 members**    **-3.22%**

**Licensed amateur radio operators in Western Washington (WWA) Section**

County	Number of ARS Licensees
King	10,403
Pierce	3,637
Snohomish	3,364
Clark	2,520
Kitsap	1,870
Thurston	1,412
Whatcom	1,245
Skagit	862
Clallam	819
Island	741
Jefferson	651
Lewis	580

Cowlitz	485
Mason	414
Grays Harbor	358
San Juan	332
Pacific	218
Skamania	91
Wahkiakum	56
Total Licensees	30,058

The numbers shown in the chart above are the total number listed by the Federal Communications Commission. This number includes canceled, expired, Silent Keys, etc.

I estimate that the number of *active* amateur radio operators is 22, 544.

*The percentage of ARRL members is 20.6%*

What is a reasonable number of ARRL members in relationship to the total Amateur Radio Service population? My ideal goal based on the data available is:

- Percentage: 21.5%
- Target Goal: 4,848

This goal will require us to increase our ARRL membership by 200 members. This includes member retention and recruitment.

How do we get to a total membership of 4,848? I need to identify and appoint a marketing Assistant Section Manager who will diligently work with our affiliated clubs, VE Teams, and the amateur radio community to build the ARRL within the WWA Section.

The following chart shows the Affiliated Club statistics:

County	Club Members	Voting Members	Voting Licensed Amateur Members	Voting ARRL Members	Percent ARRL Members	Comments
Clallam	18	18	18	13		
	56	56	56	34		
Clallam Total	74	74	74	47	64	No ARRL Special Service Clubs
Clark	386	280	275	255		
	14	14	14	9		
Clark Total	400	294	289	264	66	1 ARRL Special Service Club
Cowlitz	56	56	53	28	50	No ARRL Special Service Clubs
Grays Harbor	28	28	28	18	64	No ARRL Special Service Clubs
Island	121	118	118	105	87	1 ARRL Special Service Club
Jefferson	58	58	58	15		
	5	5	4	3		
	31	31	31	15		
Jefferson Total	94	94	93	33	35	No ARRL Special Service Clubs
King	35	35	35	27		
	55	54	54	38		
	23	22	22	12		
	7	7	7	6		

	68	68	65	42		
	180	180	180	105		
	45	45	38	37		
	308	281	276	186		
	36	36	34	25		
	95	81	81	45		
	15	5	12	3		
	250	250	250	150		
	86	85	83	45		
	25	25	25	20		
	17	17	17	10		
	28	28	24	12		
	45	45	45	15		
King Total	1318	1264	1248	778	59	3 ARRL Special Service Clubs
Kitsap	29	29	29	29		
	14	14	13	12		
	140	91	91	65		
Kitsap Total	183	134	133	106	58	2 ARRL Special Service Clubs
Lewis	41	41	41	38	93	1 ARRL Special Service Club
Mason	45	45	45	40	89	No ARRL Special Service Clubs
Pierce	20	20	15	11		
	13	13	13	10		
	788	705	705	697		
	7	7	7	7		
	9	9	9	9		

	34	34	33	25		
	15	15	15	15		
	285	240	240	180		
Pierce Total	1171	1043	1037	954	81	1 ARRL Special Service Club
San Juan	89	89	89	47	53	No ARRL Special Service Clubs
Skagit	91	91	91	36		
	72	53	53	20		
Skagit Total	163	144	144	56	34	No ARRL Special Service Clubs
Snohomish	49	49	47	35		
	25	25	25	20		
	108	87	85	73		
	6	5	6	5		
	173	83	83	73		
	24	24	24	24		
Snohomish Total	385	273	270	230	60	2 ARRL Special Service Clubs
Thurston	60	60	60	35		
	14	10	13	10		
Thurston Total	74	70	73	45	61	1 ARRL Special Service Club
Wahkiakum	22	20	20	15	68	No ARRL Special Service Clubs
Whatcom	42	42	42	28		
	78	78	78	53		

	31	31	31	25		
	27	27	27	7		
	178	178	178	113	63	No ARRL Special Service Clubs
<b>WWA Section</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>12 ARRL Special Service Clubs</b>

In reviewing the data in the chart above, it is my view that the ARRL Affiliated Clubs are supporting the ARRL. Where the numbers drop is in rural areas where the number of licensed amateur radio operators is low. I'm thinking about an ARRL membership invitation packet to be given to new amateurs with their CSCE. I'm thinking the contents of this packet will be:

1. Heavyweight Clear Mini Sheet Protectors Holds 5.5 x 8.5 Inches Sheets to hold CSCE and items two and three.
2. ARRL Membership Flyer
3. ARRL Membership Application

To start on this project we will need to get a list of VE Teams in the WWA Section from the ARRL VEC

Since 2023 was the Year of the Volunteer, I'd like to mention the most dedicated WWAS Section staff. First, I'll mention our mention the Affiliated Club Coordinator Lynn Burlingame, N7CFO. Lynn is one of the hardest worked ACCs in the ARRL. He works diligently with our 56 clubs to ensure their information is accurate and up to date. In 2023, Lynn volunteered 133 hours for a monthly average of 11 hours.

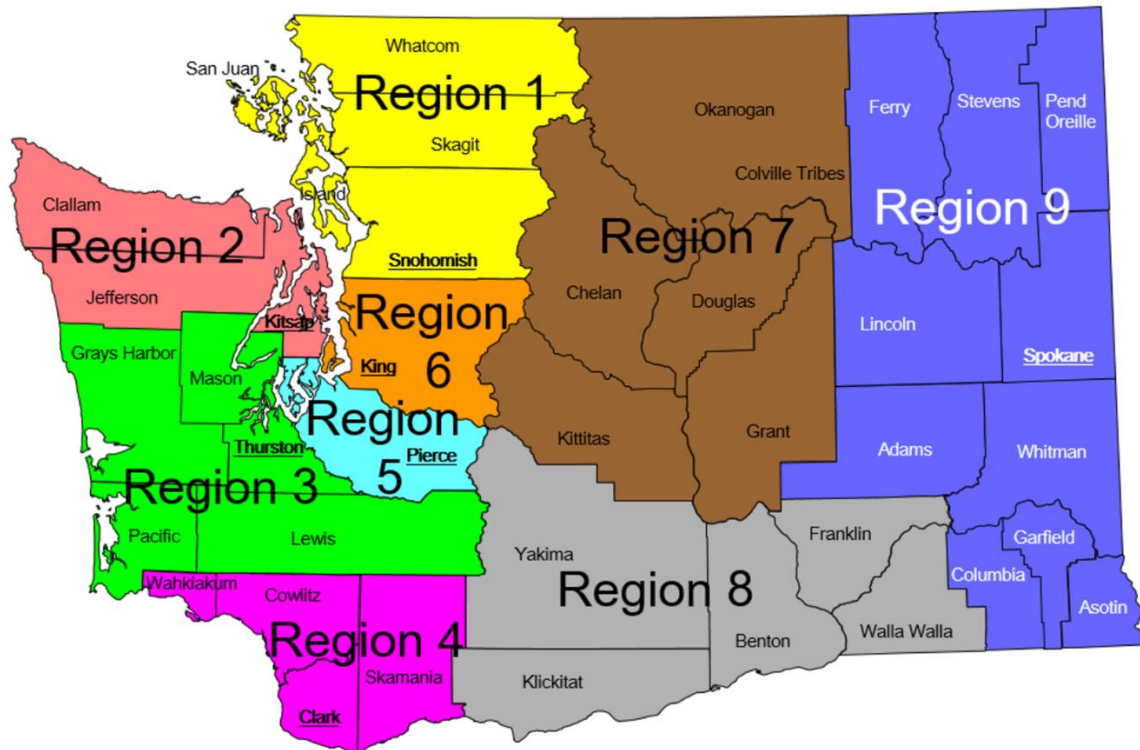
The section Technical Specialist Coordinator Tom Herman, N1BEC, provides the best possible technical guidance and support to the amateur radio community. Tom has 10 Technical Specialist that help hams resolve technical issues to enjoy their participation in the amateur radio hobby. During 2023, Tom volunteered 141 hours and traveled 86 miles. His monthly average is 11.75 hours.

Amateur Radio Service Emergency Communications (ARS EMCOMM), including ARRL's Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) is the area where members of the Amateur Radio Service

contribute the most amount of time in service to their community and the people of Washington State.

ARS EMCOMM provides public service and EMCOMM services within nine state of Washington Homeland Security Regions. The components of ARS EMCOMM include:

1. Auxiliary Communications Service/AUXCOMM
2. ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Service
3. Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service



The chart below shows the contribution by ARS EMCOMM during Calendar Year 2023.

District/ Region	Members	Change	Number of Nets	Number of with NTS	Drills	Drill Person Hours	Public Service Events	Public Service Hours	Emergency Operations	Emergency Operations Person Hours	Team Miles
1	95	1	693	48	176	11167.35	14	1458.5	1	48	43738.3
2	70	3	870	1256	48	578	16	762	1	52	5969
3	17	1	84	24	58	4327	2	193	4	158	14170.9
4	62	0	48	12	33	260.5	3	177.5	0	0	2629
5											
6	45	-51	76	101	738	33	810.1	78.2	0	0	1540.6
A	72.5	0	0	0	2	49	0	0	1	296	1022
G	24	0	41	0	12	1959	3	51	0	0	0
<b>Section</b>	<b>385.5</b>	<b>-46</b>	<b>1812</b>	<b>1441</b>	<b>1067</b>	<b>18373.85</b>	<b>848.1</b>	<b>2720.2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>69069.8</b>



According to the Nonprofit Leadership Center, as of April 2023, volunteer work hours were worth \$31.80. *Using that hourly rate and hours reported by the ARS EMCOMM team leaders,* the economic contribution to the local community and people of the State of Washington was:

1. Drill Person Hours: 18,373.85  
Estimated cash value: \$584,288.43
2. Public Service Hours: 2,720.2  
Estimated cash value: \$86,502.36
3. Emergency Operations Person Hours: 554  
Estimated cash value: \$17,617.20
4. The 2023 mileage reimbursement rate was 65.5¢  
Team miles: 69,069.8  
Estimated cash value: \$45,240.72

**The estimated total cash value to ARS EMCOMM volunteer services: \$733,648.71**

#### **Significant events to report:**

I need to acknowledge Assistant Section Manager Bob Purdom, AD7LJ, who spent many hours of working with me to get on the air for our VOTA block in March 2023. He programmed my laptop to get access to his Flex 6400 via ROIP. His act of kindness is very much appreciated. Bob is a ham's ham. He is a talented communicator who is an excellent mentor to those looking for help.

#### **SCARES Members Receive Awards for Tunnel 5 Fire Response**

As previously reported in the July edition of the ARES Letter (<http://www.arrl.org/ares-el?issue=2023-07-19#toc01>), Skamania County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (SCARES) was activated for four intense days in July 2023 during the Tunnel 5 Fire along the Columbia River in Washington. Members augmented the EOC staff and also provided lifeline communications to a small, isolated community west of Underwood, Washington, when landline phone lines were not operational. Eight SCARES members donated their knowledge, skills, and abilities for a total of 189.2 hours.

On December 5, 2023, SCARES and those eight participants were honored with awards from ARRL Western Washington (WWA) Section Manager, Monte Simpson, W7FF. These were presented by WWA ASEC Mike Montfort, KB0SVF, with the assistance of the DEC for Washington District 4, Michael Barnhart, AE7GQ. Both Skamania County Sheriff Summer Scheyer and Undersheriff Tracy Wyckoff attended the presentations to honor the recipients.

Sheriff Scheyer said “The incredible, selfless efforts made by our A.R.E.S. members provides a valued service to our community and to our Sheriff's Office. As both a community member and Sheriff of Skamania County, I am forever grateful for those who have donated their time to provide such an integral service.”

The inscription on the plaque to the group reads “The Western Washington Section commends the exemplary performance of Skamania County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) for providing emergency communications to the Skamania County Sheriff's Office and the people of Skamania County during the Tunnel 5 fire July 2023. The actions of this team reflect highly upon the Amateur Radio Service, the Western Washington Section and ARES.” In addition, each participating member received a mounted Emergency Communications Commendation certificate from the ARRL.

Recognition of outstanding efforts is a key tool in helping EmComm leaders retain their valued volunteers. -- Steve Aberle, WA7PTM, Assistant Director, ARRL Northwestern Division



SCARES members receive commendations for their response in July 2023. Pictured (left to right): Nicholas Nyholm, KK7JHB; John Prescott, K7JPX; Norman Teinowitz, KJ7VHX; Don Tucker, K7DTS; {Sheriff} Summer Scheyer; {EC} Kevin Widener, KE7IN; {ASEC} Mike Montfort, KB0SVF; Ole Helgerson, KI7MBR; Rick Branum, AE7UR. Not pictured: Richard Anderson, KK7JHR. [Photo courtesy of Steve Aberle, WA7PTM]

### **During November and December 2023, the Eastern and Western Washington Sections worked with FEMA updating the Washington Disaster Emergency Communications Plan**

During the months of November and December 2023, EWA Section Emergency Coordinator Frank Hutchison, AG7QP and WWA Section Manager provided input on updating the Washington Disaster Emergency Communications Plan 2018.

This effort entailed reviewing the 2018 plan, updating the information, and providing written input for the Washington Disaster Emergency Communications Plan 2023. With the outstanding help from Assistant Director Steve Aberle, WA7PTM, we could complete our part of the project by December 3, 2023. SEC Frank Hutchison, AG7QP, and I then took part in a one-hour interview with the FEMA representative on December 5, 2023.

FEMA used our suggestions and then supplemented them with answers given during the interview. The FEMA representative did an outstanding job of telling the value and worth of the amateur radio community in EMCOMM in the State of Washington.

I sent a copy of our input to Josh Johnston, KE5MHV, ARRL Emergency Management Director and Field Services manager and supervisor.

Corrections to the draft document are due to FEMA by January 5, 2024, and then the final version of the document will be published.

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### **NORTHWESTERN DIVISION ASSISTANT DIRECTORS:**

Note: There was one new NW Division Assistant Directors appointed in 2023, Steve McKeen, W7QLO, who has volunteered to handle Faith Based Outreach. Here is the current list of NW Division Assistant Directors for 2023, and their focus areas are listed below. Individual reports from them follow this list:

- **Daniel Stevens, KL7WM**
  - Education/Training, Seattle, WA Area
- **Delvin Bunton, NS7U**
  - Education/Training, Vancouver, WA / Portland, OR Area
- **Lynn Burlingame, N7CFO**
  - Division Event Calendar Coordinator, and WWA ACC
- **Dave Cole, NK7Z**
  - RFI/EMI Technical Resource

- **Steve Aberle, WA7PTM**
  - Tribal Liaison
- **Michael Sterba, KG7HQ**
  - Webmaster / Social Media Admin
- **Bill Balzarini, KL7BB**
  - STEM outreach, Seattle, WA area
- **Steven McKeen - W7QLO**
  - Faith Based Outreach

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## **Northwestern Division Assistant Director Reports:**

### **SPEAKERS BUREAU and HAMFEST COORDINATION: Lynn Burlingame, N7CFO**

I have done an analysis for Mike that indicates that the majority of ARRL affiliated clubs do not complete annual updates and that some clubs have not done so in many years. This is unfortunate because new hams are often dealing with obsolete contact information when they search for a club in their area. Mike will present these findings at the January board meeting.

I get a lot of feedback from clubs and speakers that indicate that expanding the Western Washington Speakers Bureau to division wide coverage has been a huge success! You can access it at <http://www.n7cfo.com/amradio/hf/SB.pdf> . I am always looking for new speakers, so if you are interested in participating please contact me at [n7cfo@n7cfo.com](mailto:n7cfo@n7cfo.com)

### **EDUCATION/TRAINING, (Vancouver, WA / Portland, OR Area): Delvin Bunton, NS7U**

During 2023 my principal accomplishments were as follows:

Served as Vice Chair for the 2023 SEA-PAC Amateur Radio Convention, which is also the Northwestern Division Convention. We had nearly 1500 attendees coming out of the covid doldrums.

Served as Seminar and Workshop Subcommittee Chair. We held three workshops on Friday of the Convention. The Emergency Communication workshop was quite popular with over 200 attendees. The DX Workshop had about 80 participants. The antenna building workshop for the ARRL End-fed antenna had about 70 participants. We also hosted 33 seminars that collectively had nearly 1000 participants (some conventioners attended multiple seminars).

Acted as co-host for the Friday Reception with about 115 attendees.

## EDUCATION/TRAINING (Seattle, WA Area): Daniel Stevens, WL7WM

### NEW EDUCATION CHALLENGES

Amateur radio hobby is growing at a faster rate than the US population. In 2012 the US amateur population was growing at about 1% per year and keeping ahead of the US population growth. Today the amateur population is growing at 2.7% per year, which is 6 times the growth rate of the US population of 0.47%. This is in spite of cell phones and social media attracting people's attention. How are we going to train new and current hams? What is the make up of our group? What do we need? Good questions.

The ARRL Northwestern Division amateurs are growing slightly faster (2.72%) than the national average of 2.70%. We have more Technicians and less Generals and Extras than the national percentages. What does this mean? We need to ask our amateurs to upgrade and hold more advance licensing classes. One teacher at the end of an Extra class asked the students to "give back" to our hobby.

Several years ago, looking at the class of amateurs in clubs, revealed that, most clubs were made up of almost 50% Extras, yet the Technician class makes up more than 51.5% of all amateurs. Why are the Technicians and Generals not joining our clubs? Most club meetings have an educational presentation. Lynn Burlingame, N7CFO, has created the ARRL Northwestern Division Speakers Bureau. This is a list of amateurs willing to speak on different topics. With the advent of social media, especially ZOOM, a speaker does not have to leave their home to do a presentation. Many clubs are using this list. A big THANKS goes to Lynn Burlingame, N7CFO. We still need to get the Technicians and Generals into our clubs to watch these presentations. I found that the old fashion phone was a great way. We need to do Elmering, too.

We need more classes. The ARRL web site has a 'find a licensing class' function. There were only 3 Technician and 2 General classes listed, in the Northwestern Division, for the next 3 months. This is not enough. An instructor can list their class for FREE on the ARRL web site under the Education tab. It is a good way to get more students. There are many free places to post a class on the Internet, too.

If there are not enough classes, then where are people finding the training? A radio club may have one or two classes per year. Dave Casler, KE7OG, has hundreds of YouTube videos. Bless Dave, but these are not in-depth enough for someone to pass a test and get licensed. There are several online courses. In early 2000's, the ARRL had King Schools produce a two CD Technician course. It was very good, although expensive for the ARRL. A teacher just had to baby sit the CDs and give the test. The material is still good except for a few questions that have changed with the newer Questions Pools. The number of New Licensees decrease immediately after a

new set of Technician questions are released. That dip has stabilized, since the last Technician Question Pool was released for test after June 30, 2022. People have to look for training.

The ARRL web site also has a place to list licensing test sessions. In the Northwestern Division, there are 76 in person test session and 39 online test sessions, for the next 3 months. During Covid, we developed online testing. It worked well, but there were 3 VEs per candidate, and a limited number of candidates per session. It was very labor intensive. A VE liaison, who been testing for over 20 years, said there are fewer candidates for the online test now and more in-person candidates. That is a good sign.

We still need more classes, and not just licensing classes. A student gets more out of an in-person class. They ask more questions and the teacher can focus on the student's needs and concerns. ExCom is a big area for classes. There are many more mode in amateur radio now and lots of new topics. We all have an area of expertise we can share.

I have been teaching for over 15 years and have done one-on-one instruction to a class of 65, where all passed and got their license. Finding a room or venue can be a challenge. I can help. Others need to step forward. Why not you? There are 12 thousand clubs in our NW Division, all with a need for a venue to meet. Let's work together to make amateur radio a better hobby.

**From FCC: Active license grants for 10 years periods**

	2022	2023	Growth	percentage	Extras	Advance	General	Technicians
Alaska	3212	3307	95	2.96%	17.0%	4.0%	26.0%	48.0%
Idaho	10526	10915	389	3.70%	14.0%	2.0%	23.0%	60.0%
Montana	4310	4444	134	3.11%	18.0%	4.0%	26.0%	51.0%
Oregon	20236	20696	460	2.27%	17.0%	3.0%	23.0%	55.0%
Washington	33234	34154	920	2.77%	16.0%	3.0%	23.0%	56.0%
<b>NW Division</b>	<b>73540</b>	<b>75539</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2.72%</b>				
FCC Licenses	741052	761072	20020	2.70%				
US population				0.47%				

**From AE7Q**

	Extras	Advce	Gen	Technicians	Totals	E %	A %	G %	T %
Alaska	695	158	961	1785	3599	19.3%	4.4%	26.7%	49.6%
Idaho	1723	271	2699	7084	11777	14.6%	2.3%	22.9%	60.2%
Montana	863	189	1254	2457	4763	18.1%	4.0%	26.3%	51.6%
Oregon	3800	765	5362	12488	22415	17.0%	3.4%	23.9%	55.7%
Washington	6065	1244	8767	20992	37068	16.4%	3.4%	23.7%	56.6%
<b>NW Division</b>	<b>13146</b>	<b>2627</b>	<b>19043</b>	<b>44806</b>	<b>79622</b>	<b>16.5%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>23.9%</b>	<b>56.3%</b>
<b>National</b>	<b>164441</b>	<b>35898</b>	<b>201814</b>	<b>427240</b>	<b>829393</b>	<b>19.8%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>24.3%</b>	<b>51.5%</b>

## TRIBAL LIAISON REPORT: Steve Aberle, WA7PTM

### ***National Tribal Emergency Management Council (NTEMC)***

In the first half of 2023, radio amateurs in the Northwestern Division (home to 277 of the 574 federally recognized tribes in the United States) helped the NTEMC conduct two virtual Technician License Classes, plus a weekly “Ham Radio Basics Plus” series of additional communications training covering an assortment of radio topics. In August 2023, the NTEMC resumed holding annual National Tribal Emergency Management Conferences following the pandemic pause. The Snohomish County Hams Club, near the site of the conference in Tulalip, Washington, conducted a Technician License Class and a Volunteer Examination session as part of the two-day pre-conference training. Several radio amateurs attended the full conference and enhanced on-going tribal outreach efforts.

Despite some gains in licensees, amateur radio remains under-represented in tribal areas nationwide. The ARRL can help rectify this by encouraging clubs and ARES groups located near tribes to be welcoming toward their tribal neighbors. If needed, the NTEMC can provide introductions to the emergency managers in tribal nations. Holding an occasional licensing class and VE session at a tribal venue, followed by “new ham” workshops, tribal STEM education outreach, involvement in local radio activities, and communications support for tribal activities, will all help solidify new and existing working relationships.

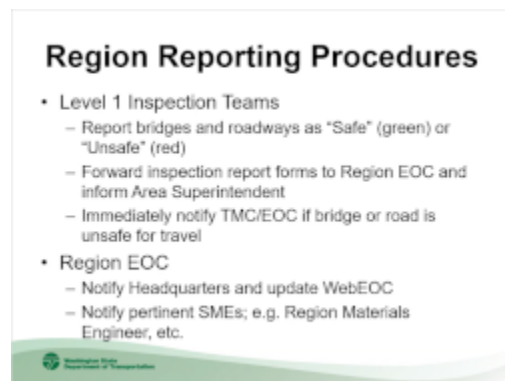
In June 2024, the NTEMC will conduct their biennial full-scale “Thunderbird and Whale 2024” national tribal emergency exercise. This exercise is in preparation for the next catastrophic Cascadia Subduction Zone megathrust event. The naming of the exercise honors oral tribal histories going back thousands of years where the Thunderbird represents the earthquake and Whale represents the tsunami. ARES, AuxComm, and ACS resources from multiple states, ARRL Divisions, and ARRL Sections are invited to provide EOC, tribal, airfield communications support, and out-of-area message relaying for this exercise.





### ***Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)***

Amateur Radio leaders from throughout Washington have been working with WSDOT Emergency Managers for several years on a region-by-region basis. On April 29, 2023, WSDOT sponsored a statewide amateur radio exercise involving sending their Bridge Damage Report and Roadway Damage Report forms via Winlink or FM voice. Emergency communicators sent these forms to the regional offices, where data was entered into WebEOC and then shared with WSDOT Headquarters. Radio amateurs in 12 counties in the Western Washington Section and 11 counties in the Eastern Washington Section participated. The Emergency Manager in the WSDOT Olympic Region, Lit Dudley, remarked “WSDOT is grateful for your service, willingness, and flexibility. Your transmissions add tremendous resilience to our communications networks. And each of you have been instrumental in making this happen. Every amateur radio operator



that I've encountered has been professional, instructive, and pragmatic. You have gathered great teams of operators. Well done.” Continued amateur radio outreach with WSDOT is planned for 2024 and beyond.

Emergency Managers at WSDOT have expressed the need to have dedicated amateur radio communications resources available to them that are separate from the local jurisdictions they span. They recognize that the

current scenario of “borrowing” EmComm personnel from local groups when an actual incident occurs will not work. The current ARES structure at the national level works well to support the current city-centric and county-centric ARES groups. What is needed at the national level is a separate ARES branch which supports agencies that have different response responsibilities and span multiple smaller jurisdictions.

### ***Oregon Disaster Airlift Response Team (ODART)***

ODART came into existence in 2022 to support the NTEMC’s “Thunderbird and Whale 2022” national tribal emergency exercise, and became a 501(c)(3) non-profit entity in early 2023. The organization is comprised of volunteer pilots, communications personnel, ground crews, and logistics personnel based at airfields around the state of Oregon. The organization has the capability to airlift a variety of payloads via fixed wing, rotor wing, and seaplane aircraft into surviving airfields and landing zones in impact areas following emergency and disaster incidents. ODART embraces disaster-resilient amateur radio communications for mission activities. Amateur radio volunteers practice with the pilots by transmitting airfield conditions, sea state (for amphibious aircraft pilots), current weather and fuel supplies on hand at airfields, relaying roadway and bridge conditions gathered by aircraft during overflights of impacted



areas, and tracking each deployed aircraft (arrival time, cargo quantity, departure time, destination, etc.).

In July 2023, ODART held their second annual “Whale Run” exercise, involving 44 ARES, AuxComm, and ACS members from 10 different counties across a 300-mile footprint. Each group stood up a Winlink station which, per the exercise scenario, could only connect to an RMS located east of the Cascade Mountain range. The exercise consisted 18 general aviation pilots making 21 cargo flights and flying over 8,900 air miles to deliver 3,100 pounds of food. Planning for the “Whale Run 2024” exercise is under way, and more pilots, radio operators, and ground crew are being recruited in order to expand the exercise. Continued amateur radio outreach with ODART is planned for 2024.



Similar to WSDOT, ODART is currently “borrowing” EmComm personnel from local groups, and members of those groups are clear that their primary responsibility when an actual incident occurs is to the local jurisdiction, not ODART or a non-local activating authority. Hence, ARES teams supporting ODART also need to be part of a separate multi-jurisdictional ARES branch at the national level.

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**EMI/RFI TECHNICAL RESOURCES: David Cole, NK7Z**

Helped several locals in hunting down RFI last summer, of course Winter reduces the number of events... One person had very high RFI, turns out it was their issue... Several local items, (wall warts), were causing issues.

I worked with the AREDN Mesh Network folks to help design and locate an entry panel for 3 to 5 antennas mounted on a city facility. They have some sort of grant. Worked with John Simpson.

Steve Anderson of the ARRL Labs has asked me to work with the ARRL in a RFI Handbook rewrite.

The ARRL Handbook now is republishing some of my RFI information in the RFI section of the handbook.

My Web site, which is centered on RFI took 24K hits last year.

I am still active in the National RFI group on contesting.com.

### **WEBMASTER AND SOCIAL MEDIA: Michael Sterba, KG7HQ**

This year continued to be relatively quiet compared to pre-pandemic requirements. While the community has returned to face-to-face interactions, the usage of virtual technologies are still being leveraged. Clubs and groups appear to be trying to reengage their communities, yet attendances appear lighter than in years past. It is notable that our community has taken a substantial SK hit which is more notable now that we are returning to in person activities.

I have also noted a focus shift in that less are talking about our legacy operations and focusing more on the newer digital modes and how to use them. The buzz around FT-8 on this solar cycle has many pumped as the opportunity to work new counties with less investment is appealing. In addition, with the price point for SDR within many's reach, interest in transmission purity seems to be of higher concern. I find myself coaching individuals on how to setup and operate much more than in years past.

For calendar year 2023, (6) amateur radio events were attended in person and (2) virtually. (4) presentations were given on ARRL Membership benefits including the last one clarifying share reasons on the changes to the printed version of QST.

#### **Accomplishments / Sustain:**

- Maintain and sustain the ARRL Northwestern Division Website, email server, and the Western Washington Section Site.
- Provided prompt leadership communication posting and subsequent social media pages on Facebook and X.
- Responded to 28 member concerns and/or questions and elevated incoming items, when appropriate, when further subject matter expertise was required.
- Continue advocacy on behalf of the ARRL and its leadership.
- Attend amateur radio events such as conferences, clubs and flea-market events in Eastern/Western Washington (And hopefully SeaPac 2024)

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### **FAITH BASED OUTREACH: Steven McKeen, W7QLO**

The faith-based groups have very busy times and some slow times. The LDS group is always a work in progress. They are a very large group and very active in some locations. Due to its size and makeup, there are always changes in the church leadership. This presents constant

challenges. Sometimes the leaders are actually licensed ham radio operators, and they understand what emergency communications is all about. Others don't have any idea and need to be educated about our importance. Due to some incredibly dedicated members, this group keeps rolling along. Every once in a while a member tries to make unnecessary changes and is trained and redirected to his/her local emergency communication group so it doesn't put a bump in the road.

You might recognize the call sign K7XH, MICHAEL FISCHER, he is associated with Stepper Antennas. Michael called recently and asked for help with a group that is starting up with emergency communications. This will take place in the next 2 weeks. Michael is helping with setting up the equipment, and I will help setup the contacts, process, and training on integration with their local emergency communication group. I teach them they don't need to re-invent the wheel, train, and get involved with local communication groups that already have the system down.

Something worth noting, I always educate everyone I come in contact with, the importance of ARRL Membership, the benefits and what ARRL does for ham radio.

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**STEM OUTREACH, Seattle, WA area: Bill Balzarini, KL7BB**

Due to the 2023-2024 still active covid19, I have been avoiding gatherings that might be active-affected with the virus.

The Large increase in ARRL membership/Dues and Magazine costs, might be better addressed by offering a smaller dollar amount payable/due on a monthly or quarterly period. This could be similar to how The TV-PBS Stations take in donations on a monthly basis.

Only \$7.08/month or \$21.25/quarter, becomes very affordable.