



THE RICHMOND HAM

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September 2026

THE RICHMOND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB RARC Meeting in person!

Our monthly meeting is on Friday September 11th, 2026, 7:00PM, at the Bon Air United Methodist Church, 1645 Buford Road.

This month's meeting will be in-person and also on Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88518058584>

QR Code for Zoom Link



September Program: This month's program will focus on Linux Ham Radio Applications, featuring some favorite applications that may interest others, presented by John Michael Watkin-Pichford, K4XQC.

Richmond Amateur Radio Club

Meeting August 14, 2026

Minutes

Meeting called to order: 19:02 by President, Darrell WW4F

Welcome and Roll: called.

Past meeting minutes: received and accepted.

Treasurer's Report: WV0L reported that the month started with \$13,574.88. Auction of donated equipment brought in \$12, and expenses were Post Office Box \$250, Printer Ink \$95.39, and Hartford Insurance \$425, leaving \$12,816.49.

Four new members are welcomed David Corkran, W1QLW (Gen), Patrick Lin, KR4NJW (Gen), Richard Arnold, KR4NIA (Tech) and Grace Baum as yet unlicensed.

School Report: W4BRU encouraging sign-ups for Tech and General Courses, and a Seminar on using a VNA is planned.

D-Star repeater: W4WIN reported the repeater to be working well, though due to internet changes, a connection workaround had proved necessary.

Remote Station: WV0L stated that the station was working well, though occasionally the computer failed to recognize the radio on a first attempt, but working satisfactorily on a retry.

RARC nets: WW4F recommended the nets to members, mentioning the wide variety: 80m, 10m, 6m SSB, 6m FM, and the New Hams Net. KD4CMK reported nets all active, subject to electric storms, and announce the "Dowser Net" on 7234, weekdays at 8am. All members encouraged to participate in these nets as this is where members are to be found.

Old Business – Nominating Committee: W4WIN announced that a list of names to be presented next month. Nominations also welcomed from the floor.

RATS reciprocal announcements of Club events agreed. RATS event 8/21, Jim Wilson to present "Magic Band". Zoom available and recommended. Attention also drawn to recent Club website outage due to cooling failure at the hosting service.

Announcements: Silent Keys: The passing of Robert Bruce Gottschalk, also W8MNX, K9PU were sadly remembered. N4DOB kindly helping with station estate items.

Estate items: Items from two estates offered to members for a reasonable contribution to RARC funds.

Club Event: Dolce Vita Restaurant Lunch, September 23. Reminders to be sent.

Congratulations: Kathleen on successful Radio Day and Special Event Station. Bill introduced idea that possibly Frost Fest might be held at the Tractor Museum.

Badges: Thanks to Rob Thomas, Club badges available for pickup.

Business Cards: Newly designed Club business cards made available to members, with place for member's call and QR to connect directly with the Club website. 5-10 per member suggested.

Linux Install: To complement next month's presentation, KX4QC offered to guide first installations of Linux as a group. Interested members to contact KX4QC.

Linux minicomputer preloaded with Ham Radio software available for lottery next meeting.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

John M Watkins-Pitchford, KX4QC

Secretary.

August 28, 2026

From the Prez

Solar Cycle 25: The Party's Winding Down (Slowly)
For HF operators, it's worth noting where we stand in the solar cycle. Solar Cycle 25 hit its solar maximum back in 2024, stronger than many forecasters originally expected, and we've now entered the gradual decline phase that will continue for the next several years, with the next solar minimum not expected until around 2030.

What does that mean for your operating? Expect more variability on the higher HF bands (10 and 15 meters) as we move further from the peak, though openings will still occur, especially during elevated solar flux days. 40, 80, and 160 meters will become increasingly reliable as the workhorse bands for regional and nighttime DX as the cycle declines, a great excuse to dust off that low-band antenna.

Geomagnetic storms and flares are still very possible even on the downslope of a cycle, so keep an eye on space weather alerts, especially if you're active on VHF/UHF weak-signal or satellite work.

It's a great season to experiment with different bands and log some contacts before conditions settle into the next minimum.

Looking Ahead: As always, our strength is in members showing up, whether that's for a net check-in, a Field Day setup, a VE testing session, or just swinging by a meeting to swap stories about your latest antenna project. If you have ideas for upcoming programs, mentorship for new hams, or emergency-comms training topics you'd like to see covered, reach out, this newsletter, and this club, works best when it reflects what all of you are working on.

73, Darrell / WW4F

RARC VE News

We have two different groups that provide testing. One is free, but only offers testing sessions on the second Saturday of odd months except June (Field Day) replaces July. The next session will be on **Saturday September 12th 2026** at 10:am

**Chesterfield Library Bon Air Branch
9103 Rattlesnake Rd
North Chesterfield, 23235**

The other one cost \$15.00, but offers testing sessions on the 1st Saturday of every month. RARC offers Free VE Testing Sessions on the second Saturday of odd months except June (Field Day) replaces July. Currently all testing starts at 10:00 AM and is at: Chesterfield Library Bon Air Branch 9103 Rattlesnake Rd North Chesterfield, VA 23235. Pre-registration Required. Walk-ins Accepted. Pre-Registration required for Techs and for special needs applicants. Anyone taking the Tech exam needs a FRN from the FCC (Google obtaining a FCC FRN) and bring that info to the session. If you have questions about a session, please see our website, www.rarclub.net or contact Allan, WA3J, at 804-399-8724, or ve@rarclub.net

KC4TS Volunteer Examiner Team

The KC4TS Volunteer Examiner Team provides [W4VEC](#) license exam sessions in the Richmond area on the 1st Saturday of every month.

Unless indicated below, exams are being given at the **Gospel Light Baptist Church at [2109 Anderson Highway](#) in Powhatan, VA. ([Map](#))**

Check-in is between 10am and 12pm and we stay as long as needed to finish all the exams. Walk-in candidates are welcome! You just need a valid ID, an individual FCC FRN, and the testing fee of \$12 (cash preferred, or check made payable to "W4VEC"). If already licensed, please bring a copy of your signed FCC-issued license. We can provide pencils and a very simple calculator or you can bring your own.

Club Info...

RARC meets on the second Friday of each month at 7:00 PM, at the Bon Air United Methodist Church, 1645 Buford Road.

We offer 10-week license prep classes in September and March with exams following. Members provide VE testing sessions on odd-months during the year.

Join the Richmond Amateur Radio Club.

You don't have to have a ham license, just have a genuine interest in the hobby.

Annual Dues are:

18 yrs or younger and 80 yrs and older \$0
Regular Membership \$22.00
Family Membership \$33.00

Lots of information about the Club and our activities is available on our website, www.rarclub.net.

QR Code to RARC Website



Nets

RARC has the first and only D-STAR digital repeater in the area: 147.255 (+ 600), 443.7125 (+ 5) and 1284.0000 (-20). In addition to our Wednesday local D Star net (below), we link Module C (VHF) on Tuesday nights at 9pm, to REF 054C for the North Carolina D Star Net. The RARC D Star Net meets on Wednesday nights at 8:00pm and is accessible on our three D Star modules, all of which will be linked together via REF 097B. So if you are in RF range of the repeater, you can join the net on any of the three RF modules and be heard by everyone.

If you participate in the net via DVAP, DV Dongle or a Hotspot (such as Pi Star), you should link your device to REF 097B rather than to any of our modules which will allow you to be heard by everyone.

Any questions, contact Win – W4WIN at wingrant@gmail.com

Sunday	7:00 pm	50.135	USB
Wednesday	7:00 pm	28.475	USB
	8:00 pm	147.255	D-Star Rptr
Thursday	7:00 pm	52.525	FM

MRA

Interested in information or support of the Metropolitan Repeater Association (MRA)?

The sole business of the MRA is to own, operate and maintain the **145.430** and **224.42** repeaters.

For information please visit our website at <https://sites.google.com/view/kg4mra/>

50.215Mhz @ 8:00am daily Central VA Six Meter Group

Show and Tell!

If you have an item, idea, latest and greatest, or whatever gizmo; please bring it to the RARC meeting. We have a table (usually) set up near the front where you can place your item and share/discuss it with others as they arrive. We also have a section of the agenda set aside for members to discuss their "Show and Tell" item(s). No need to be tentative; we are INTERESTED in what you are doing, how you are doing it and, in true Ham fashion, how much it cost.

Everyone has a story to share.

Your first rig, your first contact, your most memorable QSO? How about a description of your shack with a picture? Old to the hobby – New to the hobby, there are lots of interesting stories out there to share. Consider writing an article for the newsletter. Any topic, any length any format, all will be welcomed. Any questions, send me an email at wa1uqo@gmail.com or call @ 508-838-8353

Mentors and Elmers available!

RATS (Richmond Amateur Telecommunications Society) has organized a group of 20 mentors (aka, Elmers) to assist hams. There is one group especially for new hams but they can find an expert in almost anything ham radio. The connection is from their website <https://www.rats.net/home>. Scroll down the page and you will find the rat pointing to "RATS offers Resources for New Hams." The link leads to a contact form.

For not-so-new hams the help desk email lets a ham say what she-he needs help with. It's at helpdesk@rats.net.

Many of us in the RARC are also members of RATS so you can send a note to the help desk and add your name to the 20 or more mentors serving Richmond hams.

Bruce MacAlister, W4BRU

The SWAP SHOP

Club members may list their wares in the newsletter. Send descriptive information to Armand at wa1uqo@gmail.com, or call me at 508-838-8353. The Swap Shop is presented in the newsletter as a benefit to our members. RARC takes no responsibility for items sold or traded in this newsletter. The ad will appear three times unless extended. Interested parties will contact you directly. ***You must be an RARC member to place an ad.***

EQUIPMENT REQUEST:

I'm a new Ham part of the Ham Radio Chicks. The original group started during our Technician License Course at the Bon Air Church offered by the RARC in October 2024. Some of us passed the exam and some went on to get the

General. One of us is studying to get the Extra. We have invited other new "ladies Hams" to join us, so we are nine in total now.

We are all trying to set up our shacks and could use some unused equipment that most experienced hams may have in their closets, such as antennas, power supplies, coax cables, connectors, etc.

Thank you so much. Nora Vimala Pozzi, N4POZ (vimalap@yogahelps.com)

For Sale: Swan 350C Transceiver in working condition.

I have an exceptionally clean, operating Swan 350C set including the original 1117-C power supply, the VOX accessory and two original operation and maintenance manuals, one with schematics and one with directions for the VOX. I have tested it for reception and powered up with a Variac.

Photos, and videos of operational tests at http://rarcpio.net/Swan_350/

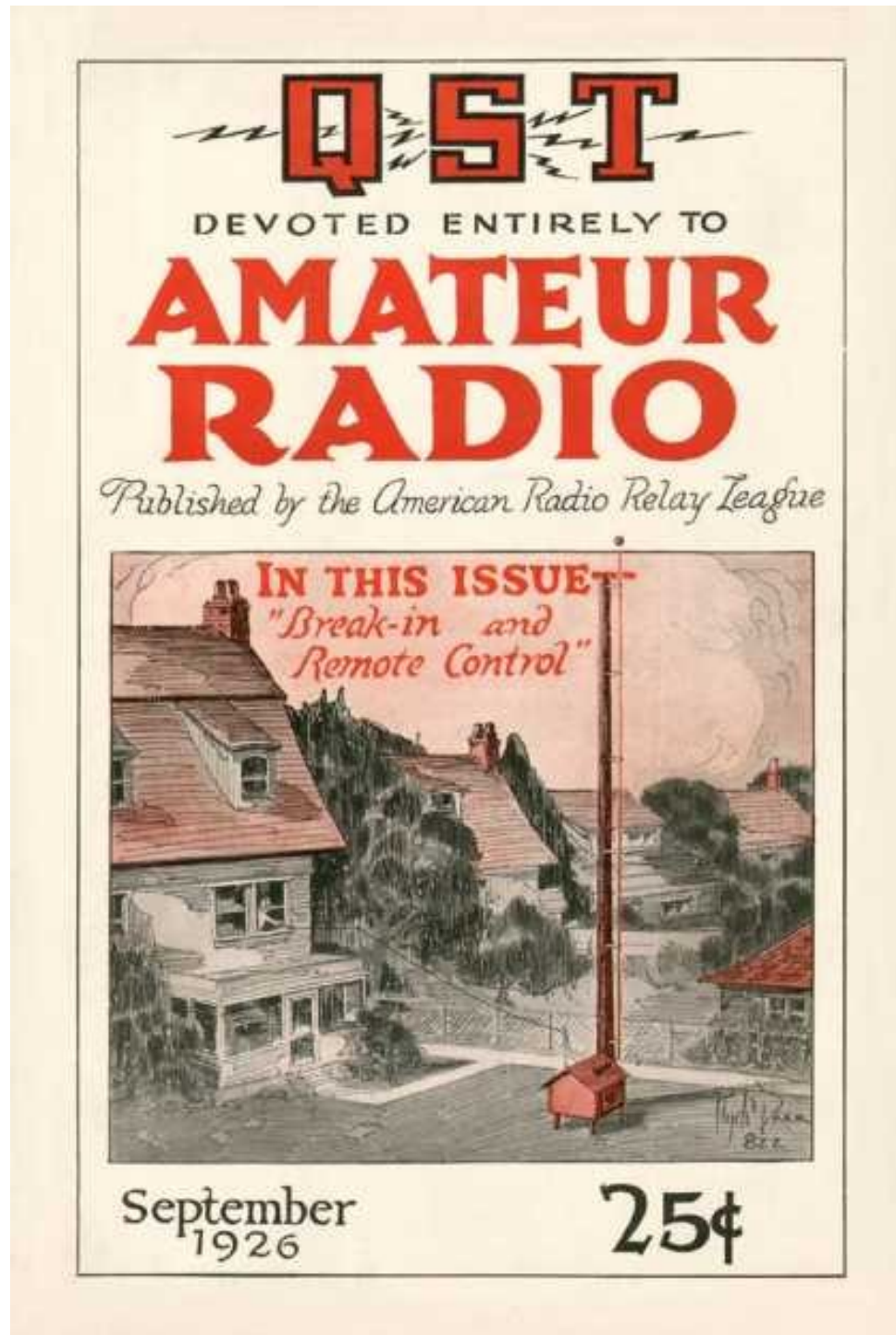
Contact Rob Thomas, KC4NYK at 804-633-4470 or via email at QRZ

Icom IC2300H, 2 meter, 65w, 207 memory channels, like new, only used as base station: \$125 Dan Bryant-N4DOB-danbryant02@gmail.com

Thought For The Day

"The optimist proclaims that we live in the best of all possible worlds; and the pessimist fears this is true."

Darrell Basinger	WW4F	President	(804) 219-8167	president@rarclub.net
Lauren Ware	W4LEW	Vice President	(804) 513-4950	vicepresident@rarclub.net
John M Watkins-Pitchford	KX4QC	Secretary		
Ken Leidner	WV0L	Treasurer		



More pictures from Radio Day at the Museum





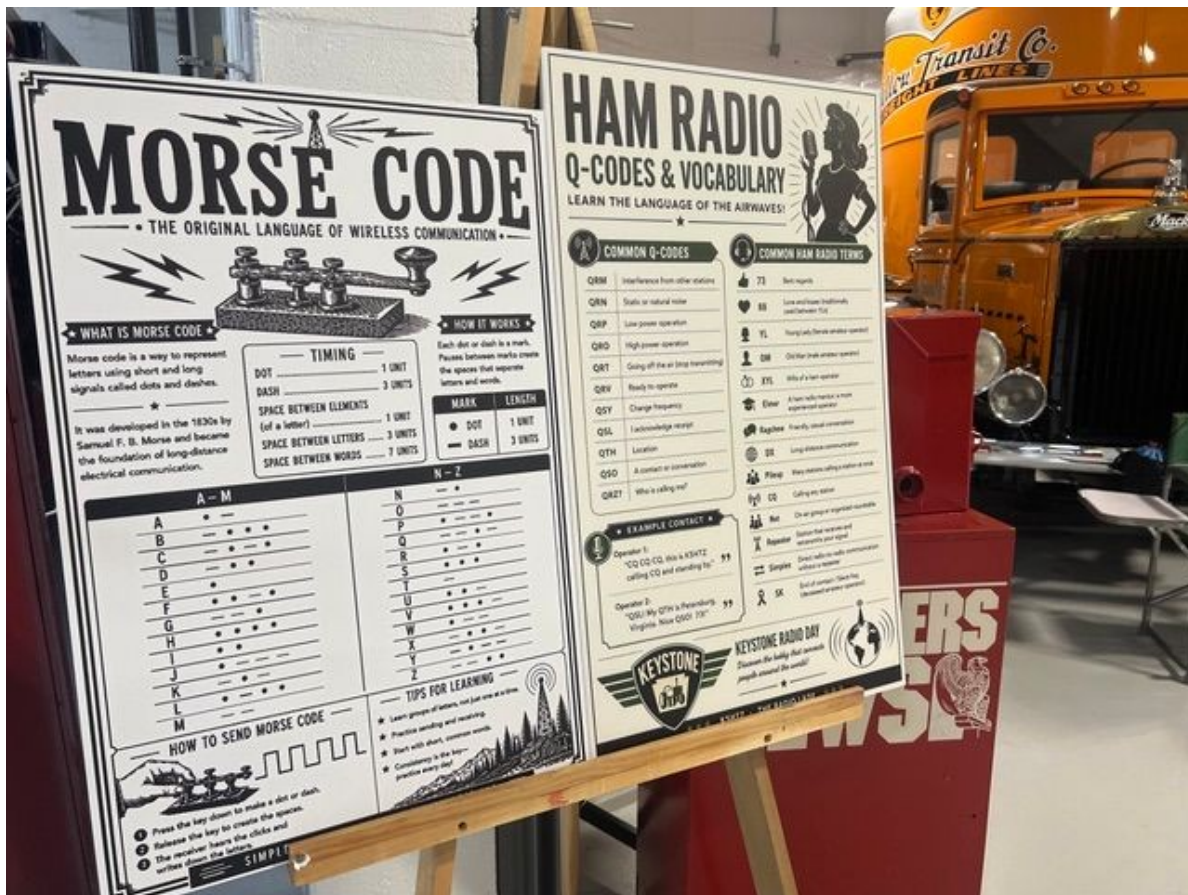












Thanks to Warren Johnson for the fine pictures!