

October 26

ARKANSAS DIAMOND RADIO CLUB NEWSLETTER

Volume 50

Local Nets:

Petit Jean Mountain
Monday Night
7:30pm 146.685
141.3 Tone

ADARC Simplex
Thursday Night 8pm
146.51 No tone no
offset

CAREN Statewide Net
Thursday Night 7pm
146.940 - offset
no tone

FARC Conway
Thursday Night
7:30 pm 146.970 pl
114.5

Inside this issue:

From the Prez 1

The Day I Learned
To Listen 2

Organization 5

Next Meeting October 8th

North Fire Station

By the Hospital and Next to Colton's

5pm ish if you want to eat

6pm for the regular meeting



From the PREZ!

Fall Station Preparations for Reliable Winter Operations

By David, W5WUP, President, Arkansas Diamond Amateur Radio Club

As we move into the fall season here in Arkansas, cooler temperatures and shorter days remind us that winter is right around the corner. For amateur radio operators, this is the perfect time to give our stations a thorough inspection and prepare for the challenges that winter weather can bring.

While Arkansas winters are generally moderate compared to other parts of the country, we are no strangers to ice storms, high winds, freezing rain, and occasional power outages. These conditions can quickly expose weaknesses in station equipment that may have gone unnoticed during the warmer months.

One of the first areas to inspect is your antenna system. Take time to visually examine antennas, masts, towers, guy wires, and mounting hardware. Summer thunderstorms and strong winds can loosen connections or cause damage that may not be apparent from the shack. Tightening hardware and replacing worn components now can prevent failures when the weather is less cooperative.

Feed lines and connectors also deserve attention. Look for signs of weathering, cracked coax jackets, corrosion, or deteriorated waterproofing. Moisture intrusion is one of the most common causes of unexpected station problems, particularly during cold and wet winter conditions.

Fall is also an excellent time to verify your station grounding and surge protection systems. Ground connections should be clean, secure, and free from corrosion. Proper grounding not only helps protect equipment but also contributes to safer station operation throughout the year.

Perhaps the most important winter preparedness item is backup power. Many of us participate in emergency communications or simply want to stay on the air during utility outages. Test batteries, generators, power supplies, and charging systems before they are needed. A backup power source that hasn't been exercised in months may not perform as expected when called into service.

For those who maintain go-kits or portable stations, review your equipment inventory. Check battery packs, flashlights, cables, adapters, and frequency lists. Replace worn or expired items and ensure everything is ready for deployment if needed.

Continued on next page

Continued from page 1

Digital operators should take the opportunity to update software, verify computer backups, and ensure logging programs and digital-mode applications are functioning properly. A little preventative maintenance now can save considerable frustration later.

Finally, remember that equipment preparedness is only part of the equation. Effective communication also requires operator readiness. Participate in local nets, exercise your backup systems, and spend time operating on the bands. The best way to discover a problem is during a practice session, not during an emergency. As amateur radio operators, we take pride in being prepared and self-reliant. By investing a few hours this fall in station maintenance and readiness, we can enjoy a safer, more reliable, and more enjoyable winter operating season.

Thank you for your continued support of the Arkansas Diamond Amateur Radio Club. I look forward to hearing each of you on the air and seeing you at upcoming club activities.

**73,
David, W5WUP
President
Arkansas Diamond Amateur Radio Club**

THE DAY I LEARNED TO LISTEN

The Journey to Improving My Amateur Radio Station's Reception.

Copied from the August edition of SWR Magazine.

<https://online.fliphtml5.com/kqkyd/SWR-August-2026-English-Edition/#p=66>

For a long time, I believed that a ham radio station improved mainly with more power, a bigger antenna, or a state-of-the-art transceiver. Like many fellow operators who share the passion for communications, I was excited by the idea of reaching farther, getting better signal reports, and increasing the number of contacts in my logbook. I thought the secret to a great station was transmitting stronger.

But one night, after several failed attempts to complete a contact with a distant station, I learned one of the most important lessons in my journey as a ham: the true strength of a station begins with the ability to listen.

I was operating on the 40-meter band, one of my favorites for both local and long-distance communication. A station was calling from quite a distant location. I could hear parts of their callsign between the noise. The signal was there, but it kept fading in and out. At times I could catch a word, then several seconds of silence, and then only noise. I tried changing the filter settings, adjusting the audio, moving the antenna, and increasing the receiver gain, but nothing improved.

My first reaction was: "I need more power." I thought that if my signal came out stronger, maybe I could also hear better. However, after some reflection and more study about how a station works, I realized I was looking for the solution in the wrong place. The problem was not my transmitter, it was everything that was happening before the signal reached my ears.

That was the moment my real learning about reception began.

THE INVISIBLE ENEMY: NOISE

The first step was to understand that many modern stations do not have sensitivity issues in their receivers. Today's radios are excellent at picking up extremely weak signals. The real enemy is often the noise surrounding our station.

I started observing my environment in one by one, checked power supplies, AC mains, and any item that might have some devices that seemed with unwanted signals.

I learned that improving reception new. Many times it means removing

INSTALL FILTERS AGAINST INTERFERENCE

Small changes that produce big results.

Use ferrite chokes on cables, improve the ground connection when possible, and keep radio frequency lines away from other electronic systems. These small changes can make a big difference.

After these improvements, those weak signals that once seemed lost started to appear much more clearly. Noise may not disappear completely, but we can reduce it and learn to live with it.

Understanding what noise is and how it affects our reception is one of the keys to improving my station without spending large amounts of money. Ferrite chokes and a good ground connection are essential allies for clean reception.



a new way. I turned off electronic devices cables, chargers, anything plugged into the generate interference. I discovered that completely harmless could fill the bands

does not always mean buying something what is damaging the signal we already have.



THE ANTENNA: MUCH MORE THAN A TRANSMITTING ELEMENT

Another important discovery was changing the way I think about antennas. For years, many hams have talked about antennas mainly in terms of gain, power handling or transmission distance. But an antenna is also our receiving system. It is the point where the journey of a signal toward our receiver begins.

I experimented with different configurations, adjusted heights, checked connections and learned that a well-installed antenna can make an impressive difference. An antenna with low noise and a good location can allow us to hear stations that a seemingly larger antenna cannot capture due to interference or installation problems.

I also realized that there is no perfect antenna for every situation. Each station has its own challenges: space available, urban environment, nearby interference, type of terrain and the bands we want to work.

LEARNING TO USE THE TOOLS OF THE RADIO

Another important step in my learning was discovering that my own equipment had many tools I was not using to their full potential.

Digital filters, adjustable bandwidth, the audio equalizer, automatic gain control (AGC) and noise reduction systems are not just extra features found in the manual. They are tools designed to help us separate a weak signal from the surrounding noise.

Ham radio is not just about making our signal reach farther. It's also about stopping, listening carefully and discovering that even among the noise, there is always a signal waiting to be found.

I started experimenting more with the settings. I discovered that sometimes a filter that is too wide allows too much noise in, while one that is too narrow can remove part of the signal information. I learned that each contact requires listening, analyzing and adjusting.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OPERATOR'S EAR

Over time I discovered something no equipment can replace: the trained ear of the ham operator. Learning to copy a weak signal is a skill that develops with practice. At first, we only hear noise. Then we begin to identify patterns, pauses, tones and small fragments of information that allow us to reconstruct a transmission.

How to train your ear:

- Listen carefully every day, even when you have no contact.
- Try to copy weak signals without asking for reports.
- Compare how different voices, accents and operating modes sound.
- Be patient and consistent. The experience comes with hours of listening.

THE VALUE OF A GOOD RECEIVING STATION

Today, when I turn on my station and can hear signals that before I couldn't capture. I remember that night when I thought I needed more power. Now I understand that the powerful station is not just the one that transmits far, but the one that can listen to what others cannot hear.

Good reception lets us enjoy ham radio more. It opens the door to unexpected contacts, distant expeditions, weak communications during difficult conditions and unique moments that make this hobby so special.

The thrill of hearing a remote station that barely reaches above the noise by a few decibels and finally completing the contact is one of the most rewarding experiences for any ham.

THE SEARCH NEVER ENDS

One of the most beautiful things about ham radio is that we never stop learning. Every change in the station, every test with a different antenna and every adjustment teaches us something new.

After improving my reception, I realize that true progress doesn't always come from having more equipment, but from knowing better how to use what we already have. A simple station, but well adjusted, can exceed expectations when the operator understands how to make the most of it.

BECAUSE IN THE END... HAM RADIO IS LISTENING

Ham radio is not just about making our signal reach farther. It is also about stopping, listening carefully and discovering that even among the noise, there is always a signal waiting to be found.

Every contact begins with the ability to listen. Every friend made on the bands is found in those signals waiting to be heard. And this story about how we live as hams begins with an attentive and patient ear.

Arkansas Diamond Amateur Radio Club

P.O. Box 1262
Morrilton, AR 72110.

The Arkansas Diamond Radio Club (KE5FSY) of Morrilton News Letter This bulletin is published 4 times a year for the promotion of HAM radio. Ham radio is for enjoyment and is the emergency back bone of communication for the communities. When all else fails we will be there, we have in the past and will be in the future. Editors are KF5SDE Roger Alabach kf5sde@gmail.com All HAM related stories are welcome.



Club Officers

David (W5WUP) is the Club President, Conway County ES Training & Resource Officer, County Emergency Coordinator for ARES/RACES/AUXCOM.

Roger (KF5SDE) is the Club VicePresident and the Communications Officer for Conway County ES/911. He is also in charge of the quarterly newsletter.

Steve Beavers (KF5DIF) is the Club Treasurer and Director of Conway County Office of Emergency Services/911

We are on the web

<https://arkansasdiamondarc.com/>

Meeting October 8th: Don't miss our meeting.

Program: Important business including repeater status and expenses.

Tech night: Please make suggestions on what you want to work on.

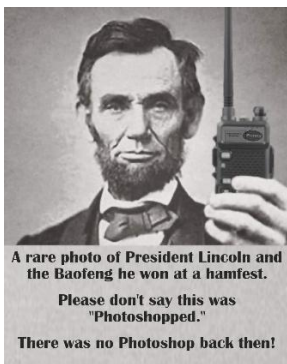
Hamfests:

10/10/2026 – K5BOC Memorial Hamfest. Petit Jean Mountain Lutheran Camp. <http://www.k5boc.net/>

11/14/2026 – Nixa ARCC Hamfest. Nixa MO _ <https://smlrs.info/hamfest-information/>

12/05/2026 – Minden ARA Hamfest. Minden, LA <http://n5rd.com> (Jim won the grand prize there years ago)

Please comment on or make suggestions concerning our newsletters. kf5sde@gmail.com



Here are a few Special Event Stations that might be of interest.

- **10/02/2026 | Rail Road Days**
Oct 2-Oct 12, 0800Z-2000Z, K8H, Craigsville, WV. Bill Edele. 3.815 7.180 14.212. Certificate & QSL. Bill Edele, P O Box 1688, Craigsville, WV 26205. BillEdele@yahoo.com
- **10/03/2026 | 51st Lumberjack Day**
Oct 3, 1500Z-2300Z, W6WPT, West Point, CA. Northern Calaveras Emergency Radio Operators . 14.250 14.074 7.240 7.074. QSL. NCERO - C/O Sam Hernandez, PO Box 526, West Point, CA 95255. We will be operating during the 51th Lumberjack day from VFW Post 3322 in West Point, CA. wptCERT@gmail.com
- **10/04/2026 | National Fire Prevention Week**
Oct 4-Oct 10, 0000Z-0000Z, N1F, Gainesville, FL. W.T. Lofton High School ARC. 14.250. QSL. Dr. Bob Lightner, W.T. Lofton High School ARC, 3000 East University Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32641. hamfire.com
- **10/08/2026 | Continental Army Encampment at Towamencin PA**
Oct 8-Oct 16, 0000Z-2359Z, W3T, Harleysville, PA. WV2M. 7.030 7.240 14.030 14.240. QSL. Frank Gallo WV2M, 106 Tweed Way, Harleysville, PA 19438. <https://www.qrz.com/db/W3T>
- **10/10/2026 | 5th Annual Scratching Post QSL Party in the Lucedale**
Oct 10, 1300Z-2300Z, K5K, Lucedale, MS. George County ARES-Lucedale, Mississippi. 7.074 7.265 14.325 28.390. QSL. Brent Albrecht, 2088 Will Pet Rd., Lucedale, MS 39452. gcmsares.org
- **10/17/2026 | Yorktown Special Event**
Oct 17, 1400Z-2000Z, K4RC, Williamsburg, VA. Williamsburg Area Amateur Radio Club. 7.265 14.265. Certificate. Williamsburg Area Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 1470, Williamsburg, VA 23187. www.k4rc.net
- **11/01/2026 | 51st Anniversary, Sinking of the SS Edmund Fitzgerald**
Nov 1-Nov 14, 0000Z-2359Z, W8F, Livonia, MI. Livonia Amateur Radio Club. 14.260 7.260 7.050 14.050. Certificate. Electronic Only See QRZ page, 145.350 MHz, Livonia, MI 48151. <https://livoniaarc.com>
- **11/06/2026 | 18th Annual Veteran Honor Guard Vigil at the Ottawa IL War Memorial**
Nov 6-Nov 7, 2200Z-2200Z, W9TAL, Ottawa, IL. The American Legion Post 33 Amateur Radio Club.. 7.074 14.074 . QSL. Joe Tokarz, The American Legion Post 33 Amateur Radio Club, 901 LaSalle St., Ottawa, IL 61350. <https://www.ottawaalpost33.com>
- **11/11/2026 | 100th ANNIVERSARY OF ROUTE 66**
Nov 11, 1700Z-2100Z, WE7GV, Sahuarita, AZ. Green Valley Amateur Radio Club. 14.242 14.246 14.248 . Certificate & QSL. Tom Lang K7VOA, 1085 W EL TORO RD, , Sahuarita, AZ 85629. www.gvarc.us
- **11/11/2026 | Veteran's Day, National DDay Memorial**
Nov 11, 1430Z-1900Z, W2B, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA. New River Valley Amateur Radio Club. 14.262. QSL. Danny Wylam, 710 McDaniel Drive Southeast, CHRISTIANSBURG, VA 24073-3848. Veteran's Day from the National DDay Memorial in Bedford VA dannywylam@gmail.com
- **12/05/2026 | Christmas in Bethlehem special event**
Dec 5, 1400Z-2330Z, W9WWI, Bethlehem, IN. Clark County Amateur radio club of Indiana . 7.180. QSL. Clark County Amateur Radio Club , c/o N9DPR (secretary) , P.O.Box 201, Sellersburg, IN 47172. <https://www.clarkcountyarc.org>

I suggest printing this page and posting it in your ham shack.

For a more complete list of upcoming special event stations go to: <https://www.arrl.org/special-event-stations>

Get on the Air!