

Volume 2 Issue 2



RADIO-ACTIVE

"Exploring the Airwaves"

January - March, 2025



Winter Edition

M A R A

McDowell Amateur Radio Association

Physical Address :

29 N. Garden St., Suite 1

Mailing Address PO Box 1084
Marion, NC 28752



W4HOG



Message From the President

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and anticipates a Happy New Year. The last one was a doozy. We are developing plans to improve our response and EOC compatibility for 2025. As these plans develop we will keep everyone informed.

In the interim I would like to highlight some of our members. Let me start by saying I am proud and grateful to be part of this group of Hams. I was truly impressed with the amateur community during our recent event Helene; both our group and the region in general. There were of course many people, but I would like to call out a few in particular.

Lynn worked as our link to the EOC and facilitated our work with them. Jim worked tirelessly manning the radio at the club. With backup from Curt, Dennis, Lori and Keven the club was ready to help out as needed. I would also like to recognize Scot, Jimmy and the Dobbins. Randy and Beth continue to help outside our community as the recovery continues. Many others contributed in their own ways and we are grateful to all.

Best Regards,

Peter KM4DNU



Board of Directors

President: Peter Lamb
KM4DNU

V.P. : Randy Randolph
K4WWB

Secretary: Wyan Young
W4YAN

Treasurer: Dennis Williams
KO4OBH

Jim Elkins KG4IKQ

David Hayden K4UVX

Scot Reese KN4CBS

Landy Young W4SQL

Chuck Simpson K3CHS

Randy Dobbins NL7OT

The W4HOG Amateur Radio Club, also known as the McDowell Amateur Radio Association, is a vibrant community of amateur radio enthusiasts located in Marion, North Carolina.

With a rich history and a passion for radio communications, the club offers a range of activities and services, including license testing for new members and a variety of repeaters to enhance communication capabilities.

The club's call sign, W4HOG, is well-known in the amateur radio world, and they hold regular meetings at their clubhouse on Garden Street.

Their dedication to the hobby and community service is exemplified by their involvement in Emergency Communications exercises, ensuring that in times of need, they can provide invaluable support to local emergency services.

Letter from the Secretary



Greetings from the Secretary,

What a great year for MARA this has been!

Big thanks to all that helped get the club ready and helped decorated, made food and donated prizes for the Christmas dinner. We had a delicious Christmas feast and great company.

We have had many new members join, seen many folks pass their tech exam, had a great Spring Field Day, moved to the upstairs and a new radio room. One of the highlights for the club was having a new website created for MARA by Dan Mrozkowski. Like most websites it is always evolving, so check it out often. W4HOG.org

We also enjoyed meeting other hams at the picnic on the Blue Ridge, and countless nefarious plots against the good citizens of McDowell County were foiled thanks to some skilled fox hunters. We had a couple of tailgates in our own parking lot. Hats and vests were made by Rick.

We learned about using the International Space Station to make DX contacts and learned how we can participate in Parks on the Air. We had our first digital newsletter published. Some of the wives have gotten together to forge new friendships and support MARA.

One of the most important events MARA participated in was the W4HOG emergency net after Hurricane Helene. Many members gave of their time, energy and monies to make all this happen. Many thanks to all for working on so many projects.

The above could not have happened without the willingness of members to take charge and get something started. Ham Radio has so many facets, there is something for everyone. However, for successful projects volunteers are needed. Those that are hams must encourage and mentor new hams for this hobby to continue and grow.

That being said. I ask you; What would you like to participate in next year? Can you give a short program before the meeting? Can you be an Elmer to a new ham? Can you be a greeter at meetings with visitors? Can you commit to an hour or two to make contacts at a Field Day? Would you like to set up a group to participate in a DX contest from the club's radio room? Can you teach or co-teach a class on some topic? Maybe you can teach new hams how to make a YAGI to fox hunt? Can you write an article for the newsletter? Could you put together information packs to give out at testing?

There are so many other opportunities for everyone. If you have an idea bring it up at a meeting. If you would like to give a program before a meeting let Chuck Simpson K3CHS know, he will add it to the schedule. If you have an article or review for the newsletter send it to Lori Penton-Shields KQ4SSF lpshields7@gmail.com.

Just a quick word about the XYL's, we would love to have your wife/girlfriend/significant other join us. On Facebook they can go to YLs and XYLs of W4HOG at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/389803474083653> if they are not on FB or can't find it they can email me w4yan@proton.me or Lori lpshields7@gmail.com and ask for a link or just to get information by text or email. We would love to invite them to non-Ham related activities as well as the things we do to support MARA events. Several wives at the Christmas dinner sounded interested, so please share.

Wyan Young, W4YAN



UPCOMING EVENTS

Club meetings: Second Tuesday
of each month,
7:00 PM

Meetings are held behind the Red Cross building,
29 Garden St, Suite 1, Marion, NC

MARA Weekly Net Meeting
Every Tuesday, 8:30 p.m.
Except Club Meeting Nights

Foxhunt Fridays
Every Friday 3:00 p.m.

JANUARY 2025

01/04 License Testing 8:30 a.m.
01/14 Monthly Club Meeting 7:00 p.m.
{Emergency Preparation} Randy Randolph K4WWB
01/25-26 Winter Field Day at Club

FEBRUARY 2025

02/08 License Testing 8:30 a.m.
02/08 Stampin' Up Card Crafts 11:00 a.m.
02/11 Monthly Club Meeting 7:00 p.m.
{ FT8 } Dennis Williams KO4OBH

MARCH 2025

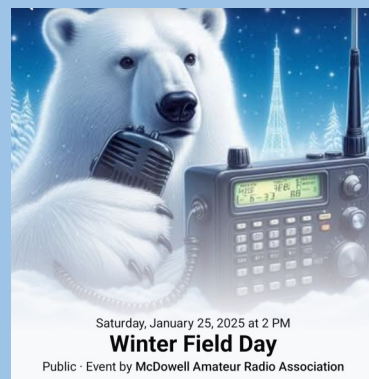
03/01 License Testing 8:30 a.m.
03/11 Monthly Club Meeting 7:00 p.m.
{ TBA }

April 2025

04/18 World Amateur Radio Day
04/26 Rock n Roller Ride

June 2025

06/26 Field Day



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January 2025

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|--------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | AARL Straight Key Contest 1 | | | Testing 8:30 a.m. AARL Kids Day 4 |
| AARL RTTY Roundup 5 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | Club Meeting 7:00 p.m. 14 | | | | AARL VHF 18 |
| AARL VHF 19 | AARL VHF 20 | | | | | Winter Field Day 25 |
| Winter Field Day 26 | | | | | | |

February 2025

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|----------|--------|--|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| | | | | | | Testing 8:30 a.m. Stampin Up Cards 11:00 8 |
| | AARL School Club Round up 10 | Club Meeting 7:00 p.m. 11 | | | | AARL Int DX CW 15 |
| AARL Int DX CW 16 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

March 2025

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---------------------|--------|---------------------------|-----------|----------|--------|---------------------------------------|
| | | | | | | Testing 8:30 a.m. AARL Int DX Phone 1 |
| AARL Int DX Phone 2 | | | | | | Charlotte Hamfest 8 |
| | | | | | | |
| | | Club Meeting 7:00 p.m. 18 | | | | |
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ISS Ham Radio

Member Mike White has been following ISS (International Space Station) for a long time.

Mikes presentation to the MARA members provided information such as links to upload and download to the satellite and how to know when the ISS is over your area.

The ISS repeater link for upload is 145.990 and the download link is 145.990. The doppler effect to compensate for shift is used on downlink.

“The effects of doppler shift during a given pass of the ISS. Along the horizontal axis is the duration of the pass, measured in seconds. The center of the pass is positioned to the center of the horizontal axis. The vertical axis is the amount of doppler shift for a 145.800 MHz downlink, measured in Hertz.

Tuning Increment For Your Radio

To compensate for doppler, you'll need to know when the doppler shift reaches the point that is equal to an amount of one-half of the tuning increment. For example, for a radio that can tune in increments of 5 KHz, the point of interest is 2.5 KHz. While the doppler shift is less than 2.5 KHz, there is no value in changing frequencies. When the doppler shift exceeds 2.5 KHz, you change the frequency of your radio to the next frequency above or below the one that you're using.”

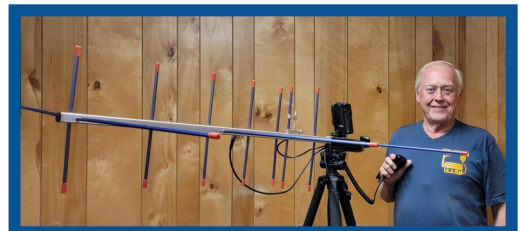
<https://www.qsl.net/ah6rh/am-radio/spacecomm/doppler-and-the-iss.html>

Mike has also designed a special antennae for his ISS endeavors.

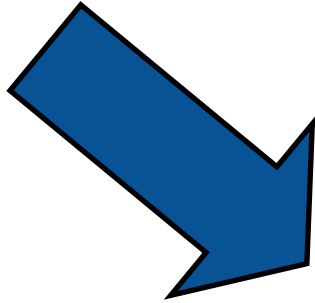
For more information on ISS go to <https://www.ariss.org/>



Mike White KN4UMQ is a member of the Marion Amateur Radio Association, MARA in Marion, NC. and board of directors 2024.



TESTING



McDowell Amateur Radio Association
29 N. Garden St Suite 1
Marion, NC 28752

License Testing

First Saturday Each Month,

8:30 AM Registration

9:00 AM testing.

As of January 1st, 2025 all testing will be recorded electronically

Questions - Contact: Larry Withrow AF4HX
(828-442-2459)

Note - All Applicants for licenses *MUST* have their FRN number (FCC Registration Number) prior to testing or they will not be allowed to test. If you have not gotten your FRN, go to <https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/support/knowledge-base/universal-licensing-system-uls-resources/getting-fcc-registration> for instructions on obtaining one.

Study Options for Testing

<https://hamradioprep.com/free-ham-radio-practice-tests/>

<https://www.ARRL.org>





YLs and XYLs of W4HOG

WELCOME

To The

M A R A

McDowell Amateur Radio Association

**Please Join Us at the Club For
These Upcoming Events !**

Saturday, January 25-26th Winter Field Day 8:00 a.m.

Bring: Soups, Chili, Cornbread, Desserts or other Comfort Foods.

Coffee and Hot Chocolate

Saturday, February 8th Stampin' Up Card Making Class 11:00 a.m.

Make & Take 5 Cards

No crafting experience necessary

Cost: \$10.00

**Bring: Glue sticks for cards, adhesive glue for ribbon and embellishments,
scissors**

Invite a Friend

Contact:

Wyan W4YAN Wayan@proton.me

Lori KQ4SSF Ipshields7@gmail.com

Beth KN4JPY bobbins2@yahoo.com

YLs and XYLs of W4HOG on Facebook

PARKS ON THE AIR



Parks on the Air (POTA) is a program for international portable amateur radio operations that promote emergency awareness and communications from national/federal and state/provincial level parks.

MARA member Chuck Simpson K3CHS in his presentation at the club meeting describes Parks on the Air as an activity rather than a contest. A way to get outside and play radio in a park. You can set up many different ways – my preferred way is to find a picnic table and use a ham stick on my car. “Field day, every day”. *There are a lot of parks just around here from which to work.*



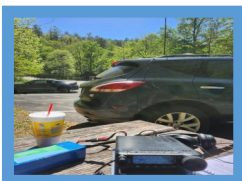
My personal favorite has been Lake James State Park. Each park has a designator number used to identify for recording purposes, for example, Lake James State Park is US-2739. Other local parks include the Pisgah National Forest (US-4510), the Marion State Fish Hatchery, the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Mountains-to-Sea trail, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, any of the state parks - well, you get the idea. These are all shown on the website as well. I personally have activated 27 different parks, including a couple in Tennessee and one in SC. My goal for 2025 is to activate in Virginia and Georgia. My personal profile page is <https://pota.app/#/profile/K3CHS>

In short, there are two types of participants in POTA - activators and hunters. **Activators** are the ones who are actually going to the parks, setting up the radio equipment and actively seeking contacts. To get credit for "activating" a park on that particular day, the activator must log at least 10 contacts. The only time limit is that it has to be in the same day using UTC time. Activators can, and often do, activate multiple parks in one day. **Hunters** are those who "hunt" out the activators and can be anywhere. They don't have to be in a park, most are at home and find the activators by checking the POTA website for spots. Parks On The Air has a great website - <https://parksontheair.com/> The website is a place to track all things POTA related and a participant can build a profile to track and log parks activated, contacts and received virtual awards that can be saved and printed as pdfs. It also shows maps of all eligible parks worldwide. The parks must be federal or state/provincial level parks and there a LOT to choose from.

The "spot" page is where we get it started, if we have internet access. If I set up at Lake James, I "spot" myself on the website on the spot page that says where I am and what band or frequency I'm using. Hunters use this to find activators and can "re-spot" people which helps give an idea of propagation and also, if an activator can't spot themselves (for example, Mt Mitchell State Park is a terrible place for cell service and internet access), a hunter who has just spun the dial and heard the activator calling "CQ POTA" can spot for them.

Ways people set up: Many use portable tables and chairs, throw wires into trees or have vertical antennas on tripods, but a lot use my preferred method which is to find a picnic table and park close enough to the car to be able to use a hamstick on the car. I have used a 17' vertical screwed into a tri-mag mount set on top of metal bar stool that worked wonders, but that's not very convenient. Many people, again, use just wires that are light weight and easy to handle.

My kit includes 4 hamsticks (20 meters, 40 m, 10 and 6) and the 17' vertical.



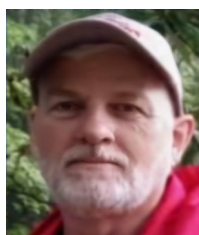
Chuck Simpson K3CHS is a member of McDowell Amateur Radio Association, board of directors and “calls the net” on the first week of every month. See more on W4HOG.org.



MARA Weekly Net Meeting
146.985 -0.6 118.8 Tone
Tuesdays, 8:30 PM except Club
Meeting Nights.



| | |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| Week 1 | Chuck Simpson K3CHS |
| Week 2 | Club Meeting Night No Net |
| Week 3 | Scot Reece KN4CBS |
| Week 4 | Travis Marett KQ4LBA |
| Week 5 | Don Beam, KK4NI |



Let's have a great turn out!

**The purpose of this net is to promote fellowship among hams and to
 prepare for emergency communications.**

**W4HOG activated an Emergency Net during Helene, connecting loved ones
 and saving lives**

W4HOG

WORD FIND

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| K | I | S | R | I | D | V | U | E | L | A | I | D | F | F | I | N | E | N | B | M | I | D | X | Z |
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| V | A | N | M | D | P | L | C | L | B | P | F | O | R | B | X | W | O | N | B | E | Q | J | H | G |
| Y | J | N | Y | U | J | F | E | T | S | B | O | W | M | A | E | Y | I | X | L | V | B | W | U | A |
| R | O | E | T | Q | E | M | L | O | E | U | X | M | G | S | C | D | F | W | P | E | C | M | F | B |
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| O | Q | R | I | Y | W | F | O | S | C | A | R | J | N | Y | B | S | C | O | N | T | A | C | T | B |

Delta QSL Contact Frequency Radio Ham Antennae
 Amateur Shack Extra Waves General Tower Foxhunt Tech Morse
 Code Net Kilo Squelch Oscar Operator Lima QRZ Wire

PRINT THIS PAGE TO ENJOY

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



A Preppers Guide to Traveling

Are you prepared for a disaster occurring when you are travelling? You may have a Bug Out or Get Home bag in the car, but do you know how to use it? Do you have the correct items? Can you get there without GPS? Has GPS ever taken you the wrong way? If an EMP comes do you have the knowledge & skills to walk home? Ever heard of Stealth Camping?

This class will teach you to be smarter than the GPS.

You can be more prepared for troubles when you are away from home. Can you make the important decisions quickly that can save your life and those with you? Can you find your direction without electronic devices? Can you identify possible threats along the route including people who want your stuff and will do harm to you?

This class could be the key to you making it safely home or to a safe area.

Please Join Us

MARA member Randy Randolph K4WWB will be presenting an Emergency Preparedness class:

Tuesday, January 14th @ 7:00 p.m. MARA Monthly Club Meeting

GET HOME BAG

Stainless Steel Water Bottle
Multitool/Field Knife
Food, Water Filter/Purification Tablets
Duct Tape
Tarp 550 Paracord
Compass and Maps
Tactical Flashlight, Pocket Radio
Toilet Paper, Sunscreen
First Aid Kit
Change of Clothes/Shoes/Socks
Gloves, N95 Face Mask
Extra Cash
Solar Charger, Power Bank
Batteries

Randy Randolph is a Retired US Army, Sergeant First Class (SFC/E7)

He is an NRA Certified Instructor :
Chief Range Safety Office

Certified Pistol Instructor

Competitive Rifle Marksmanship
Expert Instructor



McDowell County, NC

Amateur Radio Emergency Service



W4HOG.net MARA Website

Hurricane Watch Net <https://hwn.org>

National Hurricane Center [National Hurricane Center \(noaa.gov\)](http://noaa.gov)

Hurricane VOIP Net [VoIP Hurricane Net – VoIP Hurricane Net \(voipwx.net\)](http://voipwx.net)

Skywarn [North Carolina NWS SKY-WARN® Program \(weather.gov\)](http://weather.gov)

Salvation Army Net of Carolinas [The Salvation Army of the Carolinas Ready to Serve in the Aftermath of Helene \(salvationarmyusa.org\)](http://salvationarmyusa.org)

Storm Updates Marion, NC [News Flash • Storm Update \(marionnc.org\)](http://marionnc.org)

McDowell EMS [Home | McDowell County Emergency Services | North Carolina \(mcdowellems.com\)](http://mcdowellems.com)

McDowell County Fire [McDowell County Fire Dispatch Listen Live - Marion, United States | Online Radio Box](http://mcdowellcountyfire.com)

McDowell Emergency Management [Emergency Management | McDowell County \(mcdowellgov.com\)](http://mcdowellgov.com)

Lynne Greene Commissioner WA4BRW lynn.greene@mcdowellgov.com

Water Way Net [Waterway Net Web Site \(waterwayradio.net\)](http://waterwayradio.net)

Boat Watch [Locating boats worldwide \(boatwatch.org\)](http://boatwatch.org)

Mobile Maritime Net [Maritime Mobile Service Network \(mmsn.org\)](http://mmsn.org)

Intercon [Home | Intercon \(interconnet.us\)](http://interconnet.us)

ARRL [Storm Updates: Helene \(arrl.org\)](http://arrl.org)

ARES/AUXCOMMAND NC [https://www.ncarrl.org/ares/](http://www.ncarrl.org/ares/)

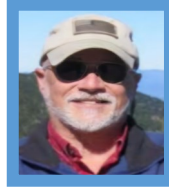
Winlink [Winlink Global Radio Email |](http://winlink.com)

Website address: W4HOG.NET

Club Events 2024

Board of Elections

Elections were completed at the November 12, 2024 club meeting. All officers and directors remain the same with the exception of Mike White stepping down and the addition of Randy Dobbins as director. Thank you Mike for your time!



MARA successfully hosted the 2024 Christmas Party at the newly remodeled Club House. Delicious food, games, prizes and fellowship with members made for an enjoyable evening. Tree topper crafted by Jim Elkins. Lighting up code. Decorations made by the ladies and donated by club members.

See all photos on W4HOG.ORG



Ham of the Year award was presented to Lynn Greene WA4BRW at the MARA Christmas Party, December 13th 2024 for outstanding contributions, emergency planning, compassion and commitment to Amateur Ham Radio.



Spam of the Year Special Recognition award was given to Jim Elkins KG4IKQ for your dedication to Amateur Ham Radio, CW knowledge, emergency action planning and foxhunts.



Leadership award was given to Peter Lamb for dedication to Amateur Ham Radio, leadership, guidance and mentorship to the MARA club and community.

Awards will be sent via email for recipients not present

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

As we say goodbye to 2024 we reflect on the challenges brought to us, most momentarily by the devastation of homes and loss of loved ones brought on by Helene in September. There is yet an enormous task ahead providing survivors supplies, homes and medical care in order to begin their lives again.

Still we are grateful for the incredible outpouring of people from all over the world who have reached out in so many ways to show love, compassion, funding, physical and emotional assistance of every kind.

Here at MARA, W4HOG promptly activated an emergency net, reaching out to members and the community.

We will continue to review EOC protocols, plan new activities, Elmer the influx of new hams and hunt down the fox.

May the Lord grant 2025 as the beginning of peace, healing and exciting new opportunities for everyone.

For more information regarding Ham Radio see the
The National Association for Amateur Radio at
<https://www.ARRL.org>



Editor & Design

Lori Penton-Shields, KQ4SSF

Send ideas and photos or

Unsubscribe:

lpshields7@gmail.com



Look for more information, events, photos and membership application on our new website
W4HOG.org

Web Design courtesy of Dan Mrozkowski, KK4ELM.
Please be patient as we transition from the previous website.