

ARRL Midwest Division Report - 2018

Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors - January 2019

Pursuant to ARRL By-Law 17, the following annual status report of the ARRL Midwest Division for the year 2018 is respectfully submitted to the ARRL Board of Directors.

ARRL Midwest Division Convention

The Cedar Valley ARC hosted the Midwest Division Convention Aug. 4-5, 2018 at the Linn Co. Fair Grounds near Cedar Rapids, IA. The two day event was a great success. In addition to the usual amateur radio convention/hamfest activities, the club sponsored many STEM related activities that attracted many non-amateur students to the event. ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR was the keynote speaker at the evening banquet. Bob Allison, WB1GCM, from the ARRL Laboratory was also a guest speaker.

Division Newsletter

I edit the monthly division newsletter with contributions from Art, the four Section Managers, many Assistant Division Directors, and others. It's published monthly on the Division Web Site <http://www.arrlmidwest.org>. Over 4,000 ARRL members in the Midwest Division receive email notification upon publication of each issue.

ARRL Board Committee Service:

Director Blocksome

Programs & Services Committee Chairman

Ethics and Elections Committee

ARRL Historical Committee - Chairman

Vice-Director Zygielbaum RF Safety Committee

ARRL Hamfests & Conventions:

Art and I attend as many of the larger hamfests and conventions in the division as possible. We always have an ARRL booth where we sell memberships and gather inputs from attendees.

Vice-Director Art Zygielbaum attended:

Mar. 9-10, 2018 – Nebraska State Convention, Lincoln, NE

Apr. 7, 2018 – ARRL Hamfest, Bellevue, NE

Apr. 21, 2018 – ARRAT Hamfest, Raytown, MO

Apr. 28, 2018 – ARRL Hamfest, Hastings, NE

Aug. 4-5, 2018 – ARRL Midwest Division Convention, Cedar Rapids, IA

Director Rod Blocksome attended:

Jan. 27, 2018 – Winterfest St. Louis, MO

Mar. 9-10, 2018 – ARRL Nebraska State convention, Lincoln, NE

Apr. 21, 2018 – ARRL Hamfest, Des Moines, IA

Aug. 4-5, 2018 – ARRL Midwest Division Convention, Cedar Rapids, IA

Aug. 18-19, 2018 - Kansas State Convention, Salina, KS

Aug. 24-25, 2018 - 28th Annual Joplin Hamfest, Joplin, MO

Oct. 7, 2018 - Southeast Iowa Hamfest, West Liberty, IA

ARRL Forum Presentations were conducted at:

- ≡ Nebraska State Convention
- ≡ Kansas State Convention
- ≡ Ararat Shrine Hamfest
- ≡ ARRL Midwest Division Convention

ARRL Affiliated Clubs in the Midwest Division:

The Midwest Division has a large number of amateur radio clubs affiliated with ARRL and more are added each year. Currently we have a total of 313 clubs broken down by section as follows:

- ≡ 87 in Iowa (40 Active; 47 Inactive)
- ≡ 71 in Kansas (21 Active; 50 Inactive)
- ≡ 112 in Missouri (60 Active; 52 Inactive)
- ≡ 43 in Nebraska (21 Active; 22 Inactive)

There are Three Special Service Clubs in the Midwest Division: The Missouri Valley ARC and The Warrensburg Area ARC both in Missouri and The Lincoln (Nebraska) ARC.

Four new Amateur Radio Clubs became affiliated with ARRL in 2018:

- ≡ Dam ARC in Missouri
- ≡ Northwest Missouri Emergency Response Communications in Missouri
- ≡ MO-KAN Council of Amateur Radio Clubs in Missouri
- ≡ Freedom Park Omaha ARC in Nebraska

ARRL Membership in the Midwest Division:

The year ended with 6,553 ARRL Members in the Midwest Division. This is a disappointing decrease of 2.4% for the year. The 2018 decrease follows a decrease of 3.4 % in the previous year. The membership dues increase that became effective Jan. 1, 2016 is often given as the reason for not joining. After three-years, we should begin to see a turn-around in this trend in the Midwest. (See membership comparison graph attached) We need to place renewed emphasis and focus on attracting new members while retaining current members. By comparison, overall total ARRL membership decreased 1.3 % finishing the year with 157,214 members. (Figures are per end of November 2018).

There are several large clubs in the division who have active programs of classes, VE testing, and formal mentoring of new hams. Most new hams apparently do not see a \$49 value in joining ARRL when they can purchase a new handheld for less and immediately get on the air. Amateur radio technology and the generation of new hams are much different that 20 years ago and we (ARRL) need to embrace these changes, adapt, and continue to lead amateur radio in the 21st century.

Recommendations:

1. Revamp and Revitalize the ARRL Affiliated Club Program
 - a. We need more visibility for active ARRL affiliated Clubs and clear benefits of linking an ARRL member to an ARRL affiliated club to ARRL HQ. The ARRL affiliated clubs should be on the "front lines" in recruiting new members.
 - b. Send an annual reminder to all affiliated clubs to update their record information at the end of January (after most clubs' annual election of officers). If no updates are received after 3 or 4 years, drop the club's affiliation i.e. eliminate "inactive" club status.

- c. Consider offering a discount on bulk orders of ARRL publications. Amount of one-time discount could be tied to the number of new ham's that join the club and become ARRL members.
2. New Ham + First Time ARRL Membership
 - a. Consider offering a 6-month "trial" membership for \$19.00
 - b. Consider offering a smaller monthly magazine with articles aimed at the New Ham + First Time ARRL member for the first 12-months in addition to QST for the regular dues rates. This could be digital only to minimize cost impact.
 - c. Consider offering a discount gift certificate to the "Elmer/Mentor" of a New Ham & First Time ARRL member (Elmer/Mentor's signature should appear on the new ham's membership application form)
3. ARRL Membership in General
 - a. Consider a discounted membership dues for "Digital Only" QST delivery
 - b. We need a new modern attractive brochure efficiently describing all the services and benefits of ARRL Membership and their value to a potential member. Included would be an application form and postage prepaid envelope. This could be given or mailed to new hams with a welcoming letter from the Division director and/or section manager.
 - c. Consider a standard percentage discount on ARRL publications for members as one of the benefits of joining ARRL e.g. 5% or 10%.
4. ARRL Publications
 - a. We need to take a hard look at improving the content quality and breadth of our publications. The ARRL Handbook and the ARRL Antenna Book are outstanding and recognized as such outside the amateur radio community. But we can do better in the other subject areas. For example, we expend a great deal of effort and funds protecting our VHF, UHF, and Microwave Bands but fall short in publishing material to attract, educate, and facilitate operators to these bands. The last great books in this area were "*The ARRL UHF/Microwave Experimenters Manual*" pub. 1990 and "*The ARRL UHF/Microwave Projects Manual*" pub. 1994.
 - b. Critically examine the breadth and quality of books published by The RSGB, for example. RSGB membership is about a third of ARRL and yet publishes far more titles. They do offer a member discount on their publications.
 - c. ARRL needs to become the leading publishing house for books on all aspects of amateur radio – especially the technology driven areas.

Art Zygielbaum, K0AIZ
ARRL Midwest Division Vice-Director

Rod Blocksome, K0DAS
ARRL Midwest Division Director