

2026 Huntsville Hamfest Forum List
As of 7/23/2026

ARRL

Growing Amateur Radio through Vibrant Radio Clubs – presenters:

Josh Johnston, KE5MHV, ARRL Emergency Communications and Field Services Director

Dr. Lisa M. Shier, President, Huntsville Area YL Amateur Radio Club (HAYLARC)

2026 is the ARRL Year of the Club. The growth and development of amateur radio rely on our vibrant community of radio clubs. Learn about best practices and resources to build strong radio clubs and eco-systems that recruit, train, license, and develop hams. Everyone is invited, and club leaders are especially welcome to participate! *Sponsored by ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio®.*

Engaging the Next Generation Radio Amateurs – Max Freedman, N4ML, ARRL Education & Learning Support Specialist

ARRL's mission includes developing the next generation of radio amateurs. Learn about the programs, resources, and opportunities that are helping introduce young people to amateur radio, inspiring them to be active hams, and encouraging them to pursue higher education and careers in wireless technology and radio communications. *Sponsored by ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio®.*

ARRL AL Section and ARES Meeting – Denis Littleton, K4DL

This forum will discuss ARRL issues as they relate to the Section and the upcoming Simulated Emergency Test (SET).

ARRL Membership Forum – Mickey Baker, N4MB, ARRL Director – Southeastern Division

What's next for ARRL—and for you as an active radio amateur? Gather with ARRL leaders for a look at how the organization is working to promote, protect, and grow amateur radio. Hear updates on outreach to students and educators, the momentum behind the Year of the Club, ARRL's partnership with America250, and the latest legislative advocacy shaping your operating future. Director Mickey Baker will also share a Southeastern Division update. Whether you're a long-time member or just getting started, you're invited to bring your curiosity and interest to help ARRL advance amateur radio across the country – and around the world. *Sponsored by ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio®.*

Salty Walt's Portable Antenna Forum

Join "Salty Walt" Hudson, K4OGO — of the popular Coastal Waves and Wires YouTube channel — for a lively, practical look at building portable antennas that really perform. Walt shows how to create simple, effective antennas you can take to a park, beach, or summit, and make contacts around the world. Drawing from his ARRL books, including Salty Walt's Portable Antenna Sketchbook and Salty Walt's NEXT LEVEL Portable Antenna Sketchbook, he shares designs, tips, and real-world insights you can use right away. *Sponsored by ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio®.*

Vendors

Elecraft Update with Q&A – Including the K4 and its Latest Features and Updates

Eric Swartz, WA6HHQ, is Elecraft's Chief Operating Officer, a co-designer of Elecraft's K4, K3S, K2, and other Elecraft products. He co-founded Elecraft in 1998 with Wayne Burdick, N6KR. Licensed for over 51 years, his early interest in Amateur Radio led him to a career in electronic design and management. In his forum Eric will provide an update on the K4, including the K4/0 and the remote system. There will be a Q&A at the end!

What's New at Chameleon Antenna – Steve Krumm, KV4AN

This year, Chameleon Antenna has introduced many new products - from a 3.4 oz EFHW for SOTA/POTA to a 34-foot heavy duty carbon fiber mast to Guide Books for HOA and portable operating. This forum will focus on these new products and provide an overview of the best kinds of antennas for portable applications. A prize drawing will be held for forum participants.

Flex Radio Update – Michael Walker, VA3MW

This forum will cover the latest updates from Flex Radio to include the Aurora Series of radios.

DX Engineering New Products & Customer Program Offerings – Tim Duffy, K3LR

Tim Duffy, K3LR, CEO of DX Engineering will introduce new products that DX Engineering is currently manufacturing. Product offerings range from coaxial cable assemblies, the new TWIG line of portable items, antenna switches & wire antennas. Additionally, Tim will review the DX Engineering Rewards Program, Affiliate Program and Product Protection Plans. There will be a Q&A at the end of the presentation. Tim may even talk about new items that are on the horizon!

Organizations

Alabama Repeater Council – Grady Evans, W4GLE

No info

Joint MARS Meeting

No info

Quarter Century Wireless Associations (QCWA) – Daryl Stout, NK5LA (ex N5VLZ)

Were you licensed before 2001? Then this forum is for you. Come to this forum to find out the benefits of joining the QCWA and meet other experienced hams that share your passion.

How Huntsville's YL Club Started Thriving Again – Dr. Lisa Shier, N3WQL

A few years ago, HAYLARC (Huntsville Area Young Ladies Amateur Radio Club) had an aging membership and few activities. Now, the average age had dropped, membership has increased, and we are a very active club. This talk will discuss why the club was struggling and specific actions taken to fix the problems. Ideas and techniques discussed in this talk are relevant to a wide variety of radio clubs and other types of clubs.

National Amateur Radio Alliance – Mikel Turner, W4OPS

There is a new national association bringing fresh energy and innovative ideas to amateur radio. The National Amateur Radio Alliance (NARA) is a growing nonprofit focused on engaging operators, strengthening clubs, and advancing amateur radio across the country. Learn about our key focus areas, upcoming initiatives, and how we're helping shape the future of the amateur radio community. Come learn, connect, and see what's next. We're not just here — we're here to lead.

Signals: Museum of Information Explosion – Bob DePierre, K8KI

SIGNALS Museum is home to an extensive collection of more than 2,000 items related to communications technology. The collection covers the foundations of electrical/electronic communications technology, telegraph, telephone, recorded sound, radio and radio technology, television, and computers. Come to this forum to find out how you can visit the museum today! <https://www.signals-museum.org/>

YOTA Huntsville 2026, a Retrospective – Neil Rapp, WB9VPG

Youth on the Air held its annual region wide summer camp for 15- to 25-year-old licensed amateurs in Huntsville last month. This retention program brings young hams together for a week of hands-on, peer learning that has proven to be very successful in

mentoring amateur radio's future leaders. We will take a look back at what the campers did during their stay and how the program plans to continue to inspire young hams well into the future.

Technical Forums

Lightning Research in Huntsville – Monte Bateman, PhD, WB5RZX

NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center and the University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) are home to one of the top lightning research groups in the world. We study basic physics of the lightning process, its relationship to storm severity, and help with lightning protection for our nation's space program. In addition to basic and applied science, we also design and build cutting-edge instrumentation that allows us to make unique measurements to study thunderstorms. We now have multiple Geostationary Lightning Mappers (GLMs) in orbit, on the GOES satellites, including the newest GOES-19. This gives us lightning mapper coverage over nearly half the Earth. The GLMs were developed here in Huntsville; they add lightning information to the GOES satellite photo loop images and are becoming important in weather forecasting and warning. We also have the Lightning Imaging Sensor (LIS) aboard the ISS, and it has been working well now for over 3 years. Come see the state-of-the-art in lightning measurements and how much of it comes from Huntsville!

Lightning Protection for Hams – Monte Bateman, PhD, WB5RZX

Protect your shack and your tower! With a lot of anecdotal grounding discussions generating more heat than light, here's a solid approach to the best protection practices and the theory behind how and why they work. Learn how a lightning flash occurs and how to convince it to go elsewhere!

Kit Building Techniques for Success – Joe Eisenberg, K0NEB

A look at the best tools and techniques to help beginners through experienced builders have the best chance at success when building a kit. Joe will go over low-cost tools and the correct type of solder to use, how to sort and identify your parts, and will touch on things he has found available at the hamfest.

Creating Fun Projects with the Arduino and Other Microcontrollers – Glen Popiel, KW5GP

Join ARRL Author and Microcontroller enthusiast Glen Popiel, KW5GP, in an all-new presentation, and discover how you can use the Arduino and other microcontrollers to inexpensively create fun and exciting projects. We'll explore the features and capabilities of today's microcontrollers, including the Arduino Uno and Nano, the Espressif ESP32, the Raspberry Pi Pico, and others. Learn how you can easily

integrate Bluetooth, WiFi, and other wireless communication modes into your projects, and build those projects you've always thought were too complex or expensive.

BalloonSats, Taking Amateur Radio to New Heights with High Altitude Balloons – Bill Brown, WB8ELK

Bill Brown is one of the most knowledgeable experts in balloon launched ham radio. This forum will discuss how he accomplishes taking amateur radio to new heights on high altitude balloons. Weather permitting there will be a live balloon launch following this forum.

Adult Soldering 101 – Matthew Sager, KI4AJZ, Gary Dion, N4TXI, Joe Eisenbreg, K0NEB, and Kevin Hibbs, KG4TEI

Want to get into kit building but don't know where to start? Then this class is for you. This hands-on class will cover more than which end of the soldering iron to hold and give you tips on how to be successful assembling kits. During the class the students will build a kit to take home with them. Three sessions of the class will be offered, one with an SMD kit, and two with a through hole kit. It is recommended, but not required, to take the Kit Building Techniques for Success forum offered by Joe Eisenberg, K0NEB. If interested please sign up at the information booth. This is a first come, first serve event with limited space.

Meteor Scatter Communications – The Science Behind the Pings – Dr. Rob Suggs, NN4NT

The HamSCI Meteor Scatter QSO Party was very successful last year and is continuing in 2026. Dr. Rob Suggs, retired NASA scientist, will describe basic meteor characteristics, how signals scatter from the meteor ionization trails, and how hams communicate on those trails using the MSK144 mode of WSJT-X. He'll also show some preliminary results from the 2025 event and describe how you can contribute to meteor science and engineering by participating in the MSQP even with a modest station.

How NOT to Learn Morse Code – Keith Ford, K4KEF & Jerry Poplin, KF4BOE

Learn how not to learn morse code from Keith and Jerry. Scott Wooten talks about the LICW club, and Becky & Mike Spiceland (N4BKY/N4FFF) of Ham Radio Duo share about the fun of learning morse code.

ASCTE WX Balloon - Third Try's a Charm – Chris Brown, PH.D., W9SBS

This is a follow-up to last year's cautionary tale. This talk will cover ASCTE and our many trials and tribulations leading up to a successful high school club weather balloon launch and recovery.

Did Heaviside Delete Maxwell? Scalar Waves and Longitudinal Fields in Radio Science – Hans G. Schantz, Ph.D., KC5VLD

Did Oliver Heaviside remove part of Maxwell's theory? Do scalar waves exist? Are there electromagnetic waves that travel without transverse electric and magnetic fields? This talk examines the origins of these claims, from Maxwell's original equations and Heaviside's vector reformulation to modern electromagnetics. This talk explores where longitudinal fields appear in real radio systems, how they differ from the "scalar waves" of popular literature, and why understanding them can improve our intuition about antennas, propagation, and energy flow.

Georgia State Parks on the Air 2026 – Claude Ray, AC4SH

An overview of Parks on the Air - POTA explaining the basics of Hunting and Activating POTA Parks. Talk about the growth of the organization and upcoming developments. Then we'll introduce Georgia State Parks on the Air. How it started, what we have done in the last 4 years and plans for upcoming events. Questions are welcomed to build the discussion

POTA Forum – James Mon, KE8PZN, Ham Radio Adventure Guy

No info

There is more to DXing than DXCC – Jay Slough, K4ZLE

Jay has been actively playing the DX game for 58 of the 68 years he has been licensed and have operated from 50 or so DXCC entities. In 1994 he made several trips to Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ivory Coast. This is the humanitarian story behind the on-the-air activity. At that time, in all three countries, they were in Civil War, at a lull in Civil War or pre-Civil War. This is the story behind the story.

DXing 101 – Wes Lamboley, W3WL

For the folks just getting started in HF, here's a session on how to "work the world". Come hear Wes, W3WL, at his DXing 101 forum. You WON'T find a better Elmer, and you WILL be entertained. It doesn't get much better than this!

Using Free Propagation Resources to Make Better Operating Decisions – Martin Buehring, KB4MG

Successful amateur radio operation depends on making informed propagation decisions, not simply relying on luck or experience. This presentation introduces the major categories of free propagation resources, including statistical prediction models, real-time monitoring networks, ionospheric measurements, and space weather information, and explains the strengths and limitations of each. Attendees will learn how to combine these resources to evaluate band conditions, choose the most effective

operating mode, and identify the best times of day and seasons for successful communication. Through practical examples and operating scenarios, the presentation demonstrates a decision-making framework that transforms propagation data into actionable operating strategies. Whether planning a contest, activating a POTA site, chasing DX, or enjoying casual operating, attendees will leave with the knowledge and confidence to make better operating decisions using freely available tools.

Fox Hunting 101 – By Joe Domaleski (KI4ASK) and Mary Catharine Domaleski (KI4HHI)

Fox hunting, also known as amateur radio direction finding, is part scavenger hunt, part orienteering, and part radio skill-building. In this practical introductory session, Joe and Mary Catherine will explain how fox hunting works, why it is a fun outdoor activity for hams and non-hams alike, and how it builds useful skills for public service, emergency communications, and locating interference. The presentation will cover basic equipment, including radios, antennas, and attenuators, along with a simple three-step approach to finding a hidden transmitter: finding the signal, triangulating the source, and closing in on the fox. The presentation will also include a mini indoor foxhunt at the hamfest!

ARISS: Celebrating 25 Years of Continuous Operations on ISS – Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, Jackie Blumer, KC9LEH

This year ARISS celebrates 25 years of continuous operations on the International Space Station (ISS)! Come learn about our past accomplishments, our exciting lifelong learning initiatives that are underway and in the works for youth education and the amateur radio community, and how we will pivot to Commercial Space Stations and Lunar initiatives as the ISS retires in 2031.

AMSAT Forum – Tim Cunningham, N8DEU

Learn what is new in the world of amateur radio satellites and how we deal with constantly moving satellites and the effects of Doppler Shift in real time. Learn how to determine if a satellite is actively working. Understand how easy it can be to operate on the Amateur Radio Satellites with minimal equipment. Join us to be a part in sharing ideas to expand the knowledge.

National Weather Service and Skywarn – Robert Boyd, KC5ZJO

Senior forecaster, Robert Boyd will be discussing how the NWS uses ham radio operators and the SKYWARN program to enhance their forecast. If you participate in weather nets or provide storm spotting this will be a great forum to attend.

Lunar Mission Updates – Dr. Heidi Haviland, KK6SZW

Here we discuss science from upcoming NASA Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) landed missions with low frequency (<100 kHz) radio astronomy instruments and the need for radio quiet zone on the Moon. We also discuss science highlights from recent Artemis, and CLPS missions.

YouTubers Group

Come and meet some of your favorite YouTube ham radio celebrities. Many of the people you watch every week will be present at this meet and greet panel forum to talk about their channels and answer your questions.

Microwave I and II – Ben Lowe, K4QF

This year's Microwave/VHF/UHF forum will have a slightly different approach in that it will be an educational process to show others how to get on the microwave bands and what types of activities are available. Instead of the usual presentations, several of the leading microwave operators from the area will spend 10 to 15 minutes describing their microwave stations and setup, along with displays of their stations. They will briefly describe; how their current station is configured, why they configured it the way they did, what have been their best contacts, what they tried that didn't work, what they would do differently, and what considerations they have given to other microwave bands from 1296 Mhz and above. This provides an opportunity for hams aspiring to get involved in microwave activities and learn from others who have preceded them.

As is normally the case, once the forum ends and the Hamfest concludes on Saturday, microwave operators will adjourn to the parking deck across the street from the hamfest to work 10 Ghz and above TV tower scatter around the Huntsville area. Of particular interest, for any attendees possessing 5670 Mhz stations there is current interest in the utilization of TV tower scatter (yet to be tested and confirmed) for wide area, wide band emergency communications. Folks are encouraged to be part of this experiment."

As side activities, the weak signal operators will gather at 6 p.m. on Friday evening at Tim's Cajun Restaurant for a meet and greet dinner and will also go to Old Heidelberg German Restaurant following Sat. Operating activities for dinner.