

# ARRL Year of the Club

We're celebrating the 100th anniversary of ARRL's Field Organization by focusing on clubs throughout 2026.



## Mike Walters, W8ZY ARRL Field Services Manager

It's been 100 years since ARRL's Field Organization was developed. This is a major milestone for the volunteer-based administrative and operational structure of the League, which allows ARRL programs and activities to be managed at local levels throughout the US and its territories. One of the major contributors to this local-level management is the ham radio club. That's why we're celebrating this landmark year by declaring it the Year of the Club.

## Honoring Community Contributions

ARRL Affiliated Clubs ([www.arrl.org/affiliated-club-resources](http://www.arrl.org/affiliated-club-resources)) have been a major part of the growth and development of ARRL and its Field Organization over the years, with the oldest Affiliated Club — Dallas Amateur Radio Club, W5FC — being affiliated since 1919. It leads the list of more than 2,800 ARRL Affiliated Clubs across the country, with more joining each month.

Local clubs are holding licensing classes, performing Volunteer Examiner sessions, supporting community events like races and fairs, and providing emergency communications on a regular basis. They also frequently work with schools to give young students the opportunity to talk with astronauts aboard the International Space Station or to launch a pico balloon that can be tracked across the country or around the globe. Radio clubs are often the first introduction to the hobby

that a new ham receives, and they're the face of ham radio for the public, community officials, and emergency agencies.

In addition to recognizing community contributions, the Year of the Club honors club diversity — contest clubs get together and operate on-air contests, repeater clubs operate and maintain local repeaters, some clubs are formed to bring together DX operators as they strive to get elusive contacts, EmComm clubs work with local emergency services in times of need, school clubs allow students and teachers to learn about the many aspects of STEM through wireless communication, and general interest clubs may represent many aspects of the hobby.

It's important to note that clubs, like the rest of the ARRL Field Organization, are made up of volunteers who give their time, experience, and often money to make a club successful. These clubs and the many ham radio volunteers (without whom we would not have the diverse hobby that we have today) deserve to be celebrated. No matter their size, all clubs share the same vital fundamentals — they care about ham radio and their communities, and they want to see the hobby continue to grow.

## Ongoing Celebrations

As a part of the Year of the Club festivities, we've initiated contests for club newsletters ([www.arrl.org/news/arrl-year-of-the-club-newsletter-contest-call-for-submissions](http://www.arrl.org/news/arrl-year-of-the-club-newsletter-contest-call-for-submissions)) and club websites ([www.arrl.org/news/arrl-year-of-the-club-website-contest-call-for-submissions](http://www.arrl.org/news/arrl-year-of-the-club-website-contest-call-for-submissions)) and will be holding on-air club-focused events. Also, a new Worked All States award is available for 2026 — W1AW will travel to all 50 United States, and you'll be able to hear "W1AW/" from a different location on the air nearly every week of the year!

Follow the activities on the Year of the Club website at [www.arrl.org/year-of-the-club](http://www.arrl.org/year-of-the-club). As more information and activities are announced, links will be posted there. Be on the lookout for related stories in *ARRL Club News* ([www.arrl.org/club-news](http://www.arrl.org/club-news)) and *The ARRL Letter* ([www.arrl.org/arrlletter](http://www.arrl.org/arrlletter)), as well as on the ARRL website at [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org).



Members of the Providence Radio Association, W1OP, visited W1AW on December 9, 2021, to celebrate 100 years of ARRL affiliation. [Mike Walters, W8ZY, photo]