

MARC
Radio Merit
Badge
Program

Background

- **In late 2022, Howard Lichtman, KC3LUE, at the Rockville Science Center advised MARC Education Committee Chairman David Bern, W2LNX, of the demand for a program to help Scouts earn the Radio Merit Badge.**
- **The Radio Merit Badge is one of the more difficult merit badges because of its technical nature and the requirement for an on-site visit to a radio installation and the requirement to make an amateur radio contact.**

Background

- **W2LNX devised a program in which a Scout could **complete all requirements for the Radio Merit Badge at the 2023 MARC/DECT Field Day operation.****
- **The Rockville Science Center and the Seneca District of Scouting America publicized the program. The Rockville Science Center took registrations for the program.**
- **The program was conducted during the MARC/DECT Field Day operation on Saturday, June 24, 2023, by MARC and DECT members under the supervision of the Seneca District.**

2023 Radio Merit Badge Program

- **Date – Saturday, June 24, 2023**
- **Venue – MARC/DECT Field Day**
- **Location - Damascus Volunteer Fire Department Activities Center**

2023 Radio Merit Badge Program

- **Partners:**

- **Damascus Volunteer Fire Department (DVFD)**
- **Damascus Emergency Communications Team (DECT)**
- **Rockville Science Center**
- **Seneca District of Scouting America**

2023 Radio Merit Badge Program

- **MARC members conducted **three one-hour blocks of instruction** using a PowerPoint presentation provided by Scouting America and instructional materials prepared by MARC members.**

2023 Radio Merit Badge Program



2023 Radio Merit Badge Program

- **MARC provided lunch, snacks, and beverages to the Scouts.**

2023 Radio Merit Badge Program



2023 Radio Merit Badge Program



2023 Radio Merit Badge Program

- **After lunch, MARC members and DECT members at five of the eight Field Day operating positions plus the GOTA station gave every Scout mentoring and the experience of operating an amateur radio station.**
- **This fulfilled the requirement for an on-site visit to a radio installation and the requirement for an amateur radio contact.**

2023 Radio Merit Badge Program



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2023 Radio Merit Badge Program



2023 Radio Merit Badge Program



2023 Radio Merit Badge Program



Results

- **Forty-three Scouts**, accompanied by their parents, attended the program.
- **Forty Scouts** earned their **Radio Merit Badge** at the **MARC/DECT Field Day** operation.

ARRL Foundation Grant

- **The ARRL Foundation awarded a grant from the Alfred E. Friend, Jr., W4CF, Educational Activities Fund to MARC to cover the cost of instructional materials for the 2024 Radio Merit Badge Program.**
- **The grant enabled John O'Brien, K3LO, to compose a comprehensive handout and to have it commercially printed.**

ARRL Foundation Grant

Call Signs

A call sign is a combination of letters and numbers which identifies a radio station. The first one or two characters identify the country which issued the call sign. Call signs beginning with K, N, W, or AA through AL are issued by the United States of America. The type of station determines the format of the call sign.

An Amateur Radio Station uses its call sign to call another station and to answer a call from another station. An Amateur Radio Station must transmit its call sign at least every 10 minutes during a communication and at the end of the communication.

A Broadcast Station must transmit its call sign at least once an hour as close to the hour as possible.

Some types of stations in the United States and their call signs are:

<u>Type of Station</u>	<u>Call Sign Format</u>	<u>Call Sign Series</u>
Amateur Radio Stations	1 or 2 letters followed by	K1A – KZØZZZ
	1 number followed by	N1A – NZØZZZ
	1, 2, or 3 letters	W1A – WZØZZZ
		AA1A – ALØZZZ

2024 Radio Merit Badge Program

- **Date – Saturday, June 22, 2024**
- **Venue – MARC/DECT Field Day**
- **Location - Damascus Volunteer Fire Department Activities Center**

2024 Radio Merit Badge Program

- **Temperatures in the 90's, with very high humidity.**
- **Aleks Rohde, W3JAG, MARC Field Day Food and Beverage Coordinator, made sure there were plenty of water, hydration drinks, sodas, and snacks for the Scouts.**

2024 Radio Merit Badge Program

- **Damascus Volunteer Fire Department Activities Center covered open-air pavilion ensured that the Scouts were in the shade and had adequate ventilation.**
- **KC3LUE provided instruction on hydration and dehydration at the start of the program.**

2024 Radio Merit Badge Program

- **MARC members conducted two one-hour blocks of instruction using an updated PowerPoint presentation provided by Scouting America and a comprehensive handout prepared by K3LO.**

2024 Radio Merit Badge Program

- **MARC provided lunch, snacks, and beverages to the Scouts.**

2024 Radio Merit Badge Program

- **After lunch, MARC members and DECT members at the Field Day operating positions gave every Scout mentoring and the experience of operating an amateur radio station.**
- **This fulfilled the requirement for an on-site visit to a radio installation and the requirement for an amateur radio contact.**

Results

- **Sixty Scouts**, accompanied by their parents, attended the program.
- **Fifty-eight Scouts earned their Radio Merit Badge** at the MARC/DECT Field Day operation.

Placement in May 2024 QST

Christina Lessard, KC1TDM, clessard@arrl.org

At the Foundation

New ARRL Foundation Grant Recipients and Updates

Following the October 2023 grant submission period, the ARRL Foundation Board of Directors voted to approve funding for five grant proposals.

ARRL Grant Recipients

The Montgomery Amateur Radio Club (MARC) in Silver Spring, Maryland, received a grant for instructional materials for 40 Boy Scouts to participate in the Radio Merit Badge program during the MARC and Damascus Emergency Communications Team joint Field Day.



ARRL Foundation Receives \$2.1 Million Funding Commitment from ARDC

In a December 2023 news release (www.arrl.org/news/ardc-and-arrl-

able on the
at www.arrl.org

New ARRL Foundation

Elections of
Annual Meeting
David Norwood
President.
elected Vice
der, K7GM
surer, and
was elected
KB7HDX.

Placement in ARRL Web Site



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ARRL Magazines

The ARRL Foundation is Now Accepting Grant Applications Through October 31, 2024

10/04/2024

There is funding available to organizations for eligible amateur radio-related projects and initiatives, particularly those with a focus on educating, licensing, and supporting amateur radio activities. Youth-based projects and initiatives are especially encouraged. The ARRL Foundation grants program accepts proposals on a cyclical basis three times a year, in February, June, and October. Awardees are notified approximately 1 month after the closing of each cycle.

Recently, the ARRL Foundation provided funding for instructional materials to the Montgomery Amateur Radio Club (MARC), in Montgomery County, Maryland. MARC, led by David Bern, W2LNX, and John O'Brien, K3LO, held a Radio Merit Badge program on Saturday, June 22, 2024, at the MARC/Damascus Emergency Communications Team (DECT) Field Day site. This program provided Scouts an opportunity to earn the Radio Merit Badge by completing requirements which included conducting a QSO.

Placement in QST

- **An article about the Radio Merit Badge Program will appear in the Club Station column of an upcoming issue of QST magazine.**

Where Do We Go From Here?

- **The Rockville Science Center and the Seneca District have advised MARC that there is sufficient demand for the Radio Merit Badge to warrant conducting this program at future MARC/DECT Field Day operations.**
- **The Radio Merit Badge program will be a regular feature of future MARC/DECT Field Day operations.**

2025 Radio Merit Badge Program

- **Date – Saturday, June 28, 2025**
- **Venue – MARC/DECT Field Day**
- **Location - Damascus Volunteer Fire Department Activities Center**

How You Can Help

- **If you will be at the Field Day site and operating a station on Saturday afternoon, be set up and ready by 1:00 pm to show the station to the Scouts and help them make QSOs.**
- **If you will be at the Field Day site on Saturday afternoon but not operating a station, bring a handheld radio and help the Scouts make QSOs through one of the repeaters.**

How You Can Help

- **If you will be at home on Saturday afternoon, monitor the 146.955, 442.750, and 443.900 repeaters and help the Scouts make QSOs.**