



Second Century

Gearing Up for the National Convention

ARRL came away from Dayton Hamvention 2026 with exactly the kind of momentum that reminds us why amateur radio remains such a vibrant and welcoming community! Across three packed days in Xenia, Ohio, ARRL's participation helped showcase the best of the hobby.

With tens of thousands of attendees moving through exhibit halls, forums, and the acres of must-see flea market, Hamvention once again proved that hams value face-to-face connection as much as on-the-air contact. ARRL's programs added to that energy with youth activities, collegiate outreach, exhibits, and event tools that helped visitors navigate the show and connect with one another. There were lines throughout the event to meet and get books signed from authors like "Salty Walt" Hudson, K4OGO, and Glen Popiel, KW5GP. The result was a weekend that felt both exciting and familiar — part reunion, part classroom, and part celebration of what comes next for amateur radio. The large ARRL Expo area served as a hub of high-energy and nonstop interaction.

What stood out most at Hamvention was the range of experiences available to every kind of operator. Newcomers could discover the hobby through exhibits and introductory conversations, while longtime operators dug into technical forums, new gear launches, operating strategies, and club meetups. Young amateurs had opportunities to gather, learn, and see themselves as part of the current community and future of the hobby, while experienced hams enjoyed chances to reconnect with friends from across the world. That mix of serious education and genuine enjoyment is where ARRL shines. Hamvention is always a meeting place and marketplace, and with ARRL's expanded programming and visible engagement, it also became a reminder of the important role ARRL and our member-volunteers play in building the next generation of radio amateurs while supporting the

traditions that continue to draw thousands to Dayton each year.

That is why there is already so much anticipation for the 2026 ARRL National Convention at the Huntsville Hamfest in Alabama, August 21 – 23. Visitors can expect a full weekend built around the same winning formula: education, excitement, and camaraderie. Friday's National Convention program will feature in-depth ARRL Training Tracks, including Mini Contest University, Emergency Communications Academy, and Salty Walt's Portable Antenna Workshop, along with a convention luncheon and a special evening dinner at the US Space & Rocket Center beneath a full-size Saturn V rocket. The weekend then continues at the Von Braun Center with a large indoor exhibit hall, vendors, a flea market, forums, license exams, prize drawings, youth opportunities, and ARRL's expanded National Convention presence.

Hamvention showed how much fun our community can have when we gather, and Huntsville promises to carry that spirit forward this month with plenty to learn, plenty to see, and plenty of reasons to be radio active by being there! Be a connector and travel to Huntsville with a friend from your club. And be sure to leave room in the trunk for your found treasures! Come and see us at the ARRL Expo.

David A. Minster, NA2AA
Chief Executive Officer