



Second Century

A Culture of “Yes”

2020 was a year that nobody saw coming. By the time you read this, that long year will be drawing to a close. We have a new year to look forward to, and ARRL has a new CEO. As I wrote on my Facebook page shortly after I was named ARRL CEO: Every day — every single day — I think about amateur radio. This isn't just a hobby to me. It is my community. It is where most of my friends are from — some spanning decades of friendship, and thousands of miles in distance. Amateur radio is where I discover new things, and it is where I dream. This is my dream job — to work with ARRL, its leadership, and its vast reach of members to continue driving excitement, involvement, experimentation, and public service in the hobby.

I am honored and blessed to take on the job of leading this wonderful organization through a digital transformation of its second century, so we can continue to attract, engage, and develop radio amateurs. ARRL is late to embrace digital transformation — but not too late. We're adapting at a time when the technology, software, and access are all well known, battle tested, and ubiquitous. As we begin to achieve this transformation, members will notice new ways to interact with ARRL across areas of entertainment, education, and information. We'll strike an appropriate and targeted balance for publishing content, whether digital or in print. We will also be looking at the community to partner in creating video content, an area in which user-generated content continues a meteoric rise.

ARRL leadership is also going through a transformation, and a rebuilding of trust with the membership. We are all aware of the issues that caused consternation in the past, and we live in a time where “If I read it on the internet, it must be true” reigns supreme. Even during this difficult year, you can be assured that the ARRL Board showed the highest levels of professionalism, resourcefulness, and tenacity in getting both the CEO and Director of Emergency Management positions filled. I am very grateful for the relationships I have built with the Board members, and especially ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR, for his mentoring and guidance. It's worth pointing out that ARRL officers and Board members are all volunteers; they are your “first among peers,” representing you and all of the good works of ARRL — most of which our members rarely, if ever, hear or read about.

As ARRL looks forward, we're looking at everything that surfaces in our community and industry — from every product to every forum comment — through the lens of, “Is this good for amateur radio?” It's easy to look back and find reasons to be critical. Instead of merely criticizing, which closes the door on potential and opportunity, we'll be asking questions: Is FT8 attracting new interest in on-air operating? Does the proliferation of YouTubers in the hobby represent a new way of mentoring or Elmering? Can simple rule modifications to operating events and

contests help to expand participation during the pandemic? Do digital radio hotspots increase the utilization of our global network of repeaters? Does curating and housing a collection of antique radios and accessories serve something valuable now and for the future? In all cases, yes! All of these, and more, drive up radio activity, education, entertainment (fun), and innovation in the hobby.

With that in mind, we are changing the culture of ARRL to one of boundless enthusiasm, inclusion, and a renewed focus on the needs and wants of our members, with a bias toward saying “yes” and taking action. You'll see our resolve in the introduction of new products and offerings such as changes to our website, our learning and training platforms, our expanded view into the use of computer and internet technologies in the shack, and efforts to make the hobby dramatically, intentionally more inclusive, whether it's by more effectively welcoming newcomers, providing better accessibility for hams with disabilities, or any number of things that will increase excitement about ham radio among the people who love it. This is our community, and ARRL will be doing more to show how truly great it is — with your help.

Here's where that opportunity starts: The **ceo@arrl.org** email address gets very little feedback from members. I make an effort to answer every single email I receive. I also make it a habit to reach out via email to those who express concerns publicly regarding some aspect of ARRL. I urge you to take positive action. Before ranting, reach out. Give me — give us — the chance to find a way to work with you.

In closing, for 2021, I wish you a very happy and healthy New Year, and may God bless you and your family.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David A. Minster', with 'NA2AA' written in a smaller font to the right.

David A. Minster, NA2AA
Chief Executive Officer