



Second Century

ARRL Governance: Why is it Important?

When walking into ARRL Headquarters, you'll immediately notice a wall of pictures. It is our own Hall of Fame. These individuals are famous because, beginning with Hiram Percy Maxim himself to the current day, the wall features the pictures of every ARRL President! No one else, just the Presidents. That alone should be an indication of how important and significant the President's position is at ARRL. How does one become President? Selection by the ARRL Board!

Over the years, as an ARRL member, when a ballot would appear in the mail, to be honest, I never voted. It wasn't that I didn't want to play a part in determining who was going to be representing me. Rather, I believed that ARRL always had my back. Whether it was creating fantastic licensing books and tapes, as well as *The ARRL Handbook*; handling regulatory matters; administering programs like awards, contests, and Logbook of The World (LoTW), or causing me to want to read every issue of *QST* from cover to cover, I knew things were going just great and I was probably better off allowing things to progress as they always had.

What I have come to discover in just the past few years is how important it is to learn about who is running for office. Having the right people with the right skills in these Director-level positions is critically important. We enter this month knowing who is running for office in one-third of the Divisions. If you're in one of those five Divisions, your ballot will be arriving soon. I want to encourage you to open that ballot, spend some time getting to know who is running, and then vote for the people you feel will best meet the needs of moving ARRL forward into the future.

It is easy to write this process off as just another popularity contest. It is not, nor should it be. At Headquarters, we refer to the Board members as our "first among peers" — these are member-volunteers who must be committed to donating likely more than 1,000 hours per year in working for you. The job is daunting, and involves traveling to and participating in committee and Board meetings; working with groups; answering members; writing; staying online and engaged with

Board business; working with legislators; visiting clubs, schools, and ARRL Field Day sites, and so on. These are very important positions within our governance!

And, of course, they also select and elect the ARRL President.

Nearly a year ago now, I received strong feedback from a few important members; these were members who play an important role in our community or who were large donors. The messaging was consistent and clear: they were not happy with where the governance of ARRL had strayed. They weren't asking me, they were telling me: I had to make it one of my top priorities. And I have. I believe that the relationship today at the Board, and between my office and the Board, has never been better. That has only been strengthened by the collaborative and effective in-person Board meeting we completed here in Newington in mid-July.

So, is the governance of our association important? You bet it is. And it is only improved when you participate! Use care and consideration when selecting who you vote for.

Above all, be radio active, be that connector bringing members together, and decide how you too might want to volunteer and play a larger role within ARRL.

David A. Minster, NA2AA
Chief Executive Officer