



Second Century

The Story So Far

As I write this editorial in August 2019, I am thinking about this time last year. The ARRL CEO selection committee had just interviewed me in July and the ARRL Board was about to elect me in a special meeting to be held in August.

I started here in October 2018, and since then, I have developed a detailed understanding of what ARRL does, its key strengths and weaknesses, and the environment in which ARRL operates. This understanding had to be from a CEO's perspective, not as a member or a ham. I'll discuss the differences next month, and they are significant.

I've outlined my vision in a series of "Second Century" columns here in *QST*. In the January 2019 issue, I wrote about how I see ARRL as a membership association, a business, and a public charity; in February, the spectrum of hams' interests and priorities; and in March, the type of thinking that might lead the organization toward a more secure future. In April I talked about what the IARU is and what it means to hams, and in May the changing landscape of mentoring. In June I explained our new messaging that highlights "Radio Communications — Skills, Service, Discovery," and in July what it means to be a good citizen of the Amateur Radio community. August saw me talk about the changes in radio technology and changes in the shack, while in September I discussed, among other things, "KiwiSDR as a new GNURadio Source" — a blending of modern, low-cost open-source computer hardware and software with ham radio. This is today's version of homebrew and hacking.

In assuming my role as CEO, I have been following a methodology espoused by Scott Keller and Mary Meaney of McKinsey & Co., in their article, "Successfully transitioning to new leadership roles."¹ According to them, new senior executives need to do five things: aspire, assess, architect, act, and advance.

In this series of editorials thus far, I have outlined my aspirations, assessments, and architecture for the future of ARRL. We are starting to implement needed changes — we are starting to act — and I will report more on what we have accomplished in my November and December editorials. Change is hard, and it takes time, but we are moving in the right direction.

I have also been guided in my efforts by this quote from Steve Jobs: "More important than building a product, we are in the process of architecting a company that will hopefully be much more incredible, the total will be much more incredible

than the sum of its parts." I am building ARRL for its second century.

I have received maybe 500 comments on my editorials, about 95% of which are positive. I am pleased to hear the positive response to change from so many members. But I also learn from those who disagree.

As I write this editorial, I am receiving petitions for candidates for Director and Vice Director from five Divisions. If you are in one of those Divisions, you will have received or will be receiving shortly, your ballot. Every year, one-third of the ARRL Board is elected. Unfortunately, historically, most ARRL members do not vote in these elections.

And in every other year — even-numbered years — the new ARRL Board elects its officers at its January meeting. The Board that is elected this year will be selecting officers in January. These officers and Directors are the true leaders of ARRL, and these elections deserve your attention.

Your vote matters. To quote Winston Churchill:

At the bottom of all the tributes paid to democracy is the little man, walking into the little booth, with a little pencil, making a little cross on a little bit of paper — no amount of rhetoric or voluminous discussion can possibly diminish the overwhelming importance of that point.

— House of Commons, October 31, 1944

I encourage everyone to vote. But I also encourage you to be an informed voter. Ask each candidate, even if they are running unopposed, what their vision for the future is. Assess their ability to deliver that vision as a member of a deliberative body, the Board of Directors. And let the candidates know what you think is important. You and ARRL deserve nothing less than a future decided by an informed and engaged electorate.

I encourage your comments to me at ceo@arrl.org.

Where to Meet WB2ITX

September 28 – October 5 — IARU Region 2 meeting, Lima, Peru <https://lima-2019.net/en/>

¹The article can be found at <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/successfully-transitioning-to-new-leadership-roles?cid=other-eml-nsi-mip-mck-oth-1806&hlkid=069d63379b334a9c9bde08f9bde5b48b&hctky=1005991&hdpid=e04a4c97-f260-4069-b1e3-d0eb680bf64e>.