

# SHORT CIRCUITS

## Newsletter of the Kent County Amateur Radio Club

January 2023

---

Officers		Repeaters
President	Paul Tuley N3BUH	146.970 (-) 77hz pl Dover
Vice-President	Jim Moore KC3BTV	146.910 (-) 77hz pl Camden
Secretary	Tim Reisinger KC3OO	147.300 (+) 77 hz pl N3YMS (down)
Treasurer	Tom Libertore N3ARX	444.550 (+) 77hz pl Dover (down)
		442.450 (+) 127.3 hz pl Harrington
		449.775 (-) 114.8 hz pl N3IOC Felton

---

## Happy New Year!

### Happenings

January 1	<b>New Year's Day,</b>
January 1	<b>Straight Key Night, more below</b>
January 10	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
January 12	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
January 28-29	<b>Winter Field Day, more below</b>
January 30	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
February 10	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
February 14	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
February 27	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
March 7	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
March 9	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
March 27	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
April 11	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
April 13	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
April 24	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
May 9	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
May 11	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
May 29	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
June 8	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
June 13	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
June 24-25	<b>ARRL Field Day</b>
June 26	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
July 11	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
July 13	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
July 31	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
August 10	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
August 12	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
August 30	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
September 12	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
September 14	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
October 10	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
October 12	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
November 9	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
November 14	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00

## Hamfests

April 15, 2023

### Sussex Amateur Radio and Electronics Expo

Sussex Amateur Radio Association

Cheer Community Center, 20520 Sand Hill Rd, Georgetown, DE 19947

**Contact:** Jamie Ashton , W3UC, 7446 Parker St. Pittsville MD ,21850 Pittsville, MD 21850 Phone: 410-202-7690 **Email:** [ashton@mchsi.com](mailto:ashton@mchsi.com)

**Talk-In:** 146.090 156.7 **Website:** <http://www.radioelectronicsexpo.com/>

More hamfests listed at [www.arri.org/hamfests](http://www.arri.org/hamfests). Check at the web site, or call the contact person, before going to any hamfest to make sure it has not been canceled, as many are and have been.

## Editor's Comments

In the "Tid-Bit" section you will find two pieces about legislation that has been introduced in congress. Look the two pieces over and form an opinion, and then if you agree, or disagree, with the proposed legislation, contact our Representative and voice your opinion. One is concerning antennas on private land use restrictions. That one should strike a chord with many of us.

My favorite issue of QST is December. I can pore over the Field Day line scores every time I visit another certain room in the house. The scores are not the important part of the line scores, it's how they got the score, the number of QSO's compared to the number of participants, and the power level. Of course there is W3AO which was an 11A this year and made 9721 contacts with 36 people 100 watts. But we then came to KW8N that made 1540 contacts with one person and 100 watts as 1B. And K3WW made 803 contacts, 1 person as 1B with 5 watts. And then K5TR was one person working 1D and made 3008 contacts using 100 watts. What did KCARC do? 622 contacts with 100 watts.

So what does it all mean Alfie? It gives an indication that some of the participants in Field Day are much better operators than others, or had much better planning in their set up. The operation where one person set up in the field and made over one thousand contacts means that this operator had a fairly good station, but is also a very good operator. That would be the operator to call upon when needing to make sure messages get through in an emergency. Emails have been sent out to different operations asking about equipment and hours of operation and the replies will be forthcoming. It is the people who say, "they never contest" that will be the worst, and thus last, person to call in an emergency to messages through.

This month, the club, and all hams across the nation, have the chance to get out and work Winter Field Day. It might be a little cold, but the chance to work some HF, and not sweat while doing it, is presenting itself. Think about coming out and play some radio. If you haven't done much HF work, get with someone there who has, maybe one of our members that do some contesting as these people probably are the most efficient message handlers, which is part of the purpose for Field Days in the first place. Those who avoid participating in such operating events are sometimes, if not always, the worst traffic handlers.

On a somewhat serious note, and not trying to get into politics, the situation at the Southern border has let some bad actors into our Country. We, as in the government and the public, really do not know exactly who has entered and what their plans might be. Not trying to make a "conspiracy theory", the sabotage of power stations in North Carolina and Washington State might be an indication of what might be coming down the trail. Participating in the Field Days, the public service events, and being active in emcomm groups might just be what is needed to ensure you, the radio amateur, is prepared for an event that just might be more likely. No crystal ball, just looking at the world with some common sense!

## President's Column

Silence from the top, again!

## Vice-President's Column

Happy New Year to all! This month I thought I would share some random thoughts.

I do a fair amount of FT-8 when nothing else seems to be happening on the bands. Not my favorite mode, but sometimes fishermen must go where the fish congregate. Anyway, when using WSJT-X and changing bands I like to clear the waterfall display to start off with a clean slate. I have found that if you click on the "Controls" checkbox on the waterfall window (either check or uncheck) it clears the waterfall! I haven't seen that documented anywhere so I thought I would share.

I like to do digital QSO's using Olivia using Fldigi since you can communicate at very low s/n ratios. I am also happy to answer anyone's CQ regardless of digital mode - IF I can tell what mode they are using! The software allows you to enable Reed-Solomon identification which will broadcast what mode is being used at the start of your transmission and if you are using the receive ID function, and are close to the signal on the waterfall either notify you of the digital mode or change you to that digital mode (your option). It is great since many digital modes look very similar on the waterfall. I wish more people would use TxD when using digital modes as it makes it much easier to respond. Otherwise, by the time I figure out their mode, they are gone.

I am currently experimenting with a 20m OCF dipole installed as an inverted vee with the peak height at the center of the antenna developed by HB9SL (sk). It is supposed to be directional with a 3db gain in the direction opposite the feed connection. I have it pointed South but don't have enough data to see if it works well enough to keep it up. For more information check out <https://dd5lp.com/antennas/hb9sl-vp2e-wire-directional-antenna/>.

73,  
Jim KC3BTV  
VP Kent County Amateur Radio Club

## From the Section Manager's Shack

### Section Manager Column January 2023

Happy New Year! And an interesting year it will be, legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives that may finally give some relief to hams in organized communities. Congressman Bill Johnson (OH-6) introduced a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives (H.R.9670) on Thursday, December 22, 2022, to eliminate private land use restrictions that prohibit, restrict, or impair the ability of an Amateur Radio Operator from operating and installing amateur station antennas on property subject to the control of the Amateur Radio Operator. Hopefully this bill will pass without too much modification. Many hours of technical and legal work went into crafting this legislation.

By the time you read this the ARRL operating Activity, Volunteers On The Air (VOTA) will have started. See page 77 of QST for details. This will be much like the Anniversary event of 2014. This is primarily for ARRL members, and Log Book of the World (LoTW) must be used for scoring. Joe Grib, KI3B, the Assistant Section Manager, ([ki3b@arrl.net](mailto:ki3b@arrl.net)) is coordinating the schedule for volunteer operators when it's our sections turn to use the headquarters flagship callsign W1AW. The Delaware Section will be making an effort to include Technician Class licensees in the event. This is an all band all mode contest and operating activity. If you're not an ARRL member, this would be a good reason to become a member and have some fun! The ARRL is an advocate for Amateur Radio both here in the United States and around the world. The league's effort in developing and promoting the antenna legislation noted above is

also a good reason to support this organization. And as a bonus you get one of the foremost Ham magazines, QST!

The third Saturday in January will see a Sussex Summit for representatives of the amateur radio groups in Sussex to come together and discuss mutual concerns, and work towards more interaction and activities. Details are still being worked on, and invitations will be out shortly. This will be primarily for club presidents or their representative, ARES leaders, and AUXCOMM leaders.

In this New Year we need to strive to present the positive aspects of the hobby to the general public. They need to know that we as Hams are an asset and a resource, particularly when disaster strikes. We claim to be that, but are we ready for the challenge? Only through training and practice can we be so. Take advantage of any opportunities that present themselves, public service, contests, operating activities, and the regularly scheduled local nets. Get on the traffic nets once in a while, if only to monitor and learn.

Later, 73  
John K3PFW  
ARRL Section Manager DE

## **The Emcomm Corner**

In the military a newly commissioned officer (O-1) is sometimes called a “butterbar” because their rank insignia is a single gold bar. They have authority over any enlisted person which can be a dangerous thing because while they have book knowledge they can be dumber than dirt as far as the real world. If they are smart they will listen to the senior NCOs and learn from them. Sometimes there is a reason why things are done the way they are that never shows up in the textbooks. The senior NCO didn't end up in his position by being stupid. Giving some credit to the officer, sometimes they know tactical information that the NCO is unaware of that can influence their decisions. The NCOs can make the butterbar look really good or really bad. A good officer hears his troops and knows their strengths and weaknesses. They give credit to those who make the mission a success and take personal responsibility for failures.

What does this have to do with EmComm, you may ask? I will be the first to admit that I don't know squat. The more I learn, the more I find out that I don't know. We have folks involved in EmComm that know more than I do in some areas. EmComm is a collaborative effort as we prepare to meet the emergency communication needs of Kent County.

73,  
Jim KC3BTV  
Kent County EC

## **AUXCOMM News**

### **As the Calendar Turns...**

It was an active year for Sussex County AUXCOMM and it was good to be “back in action” after the restricted operations due to COVID the past couple of years. Some of the highlighted operations for 2022 include:

March Madness Exercise – This March 19th exercise brought out 11 volunteers who monitored traffic counts at various locations in Sussex and Kent counties, simulating observations that might be helpful in the event of area-wide mass evacuation. It also served to generate voice communications in order to evaluate communications quality and reliability.

CODEL RUN – On April 24 th , a total of 21 volunteer amateurs supported the MCU in monitoring this annual running event throughout Rehoboth Beach, Lewes, and Cape Henlopen State Park. We observed, assisted, and reported several medical needs as part of our operation.

July 4 th Events – Though not a formal activation, the MCU was staffed by one or two volunteer operators during the fireworks events for Lewes, Millsboro, and Rehoboth. Area hams attending these events were advised that they could contact the MCU's WS3EOC amateur operators should they observe something they deemed reportable.

Active Shooter Presentation – The July 14 th AUXCOMM monthly meeting featured an excellent and informative presentation on this timely topic by the Delaware State Police. The meeting was well attended, probably the largest attendance of the year.

Pops in the Park Exercise – The August 25 th “POP UP” exercise involved 21 volunteer amateurs who set up operations in various park locations throughout Sussex and Kent counties, where they established (or tried to) communications with the Sussex County EOC via multiple frequencies and modes while providing visibility to amateur radio operations in a public setting.

Dewey Triathlon – 15 amateur volunteers assisted with this event on September 17th. This annual event includes a half-mile ocean swim, 15-mile bike ride, and a 3.5-mile run; all monitored by ham radio operators in support of the MCU.

Apple Scrapple Festival – On October 15th we had 18 volunteers covering this annual event in downtown Bridgeville. In addition to monitoring the crowd and assisting with directions and other information, we successfully aided in reuniting families that had separated from their children. All coordinated via amateur radio.

Rehoboth Marathon – On December 3 rd , 22 amateur radio volunteers braved a cool, rainy, and windy day to support the MCU in monitoring this major annual running event through Rehoboth and Cape Henlopen State Park. We helped to treat one runner with suspected hypothermia.

As of this writing, we have recorded a total of 1,306.55 volunteer hours for Sussex County AUXCOMM in 2022. The actual hours are probably more since not all volunteers enter their hours every time. Regardless of the true total, the important point is that these are hours devoted to either serving the public directly, or preparing for that service through drills, meetings, training, and other similar actions.

Thanks to all who have given the time to serve with us. We look forward to more in 2023 and can very much use additional volunteer help. AUXCOMM meetings are the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30p and are now (again) held at the Sussex EOC. Come see us! Get involved!

73's and Happy New Year!

Bill, N3ID  
ws3eoc@gmail.com

## **Club Happenings**

### **Dues Are Due**

Yelp, first of the year and club dues are upon us again. I'm sure that some of you have already gotten your hard earned money in and are good for the year. If not, plan on coming to the meeting and swamp Tom with all those monies. Dues are \$25.00 for an individual and an additional \$15.00 for each family member at the same household. For most of us, that will be forty bucks.

## **Club Has New License Trustee**

Just before the Christmas Part at the EOC, a very short business meeting was held. Rich, N3JCP, needs to step down as license trustee due to health reasons. At the meeting, Doug, KB3PRW, volunteered and was selected as the club's next license trustee. Let's thank Doug for taking on the responsibility. This task has been made harder because of the lack of transparency of the username and password from the trustee prior to Rich, according to Rich. Thanks goes to Rich for taking on the job when he did.

## **ARRL Straight Key Night**

From the ARRL, Straight Key Night is held every January 1 from 0000 UTC through 2359 UTC. So for 2023 that means it will start here in Delaware on 31 December 2022 at 7:00 PM and runs until 7:00 PM on 1 January, 2023. Wow! Transverses the years! Not really, just a good time 24 hour event that even new CW operators can participate in. So break out that old J-37 and have a ball! You'll still have a couple hours after reading this!

## **Winter Field Day This Month**

January is Winter Field month and plans for the event will be finalized at the January meeting. Plan to attend and lend your support to the efforts.

Field Days are opportunities for those who do not have HF home stations to come out and operate on HF frequencies, which can be a blast. Not only does it give people an opportunity to learn new things, but gives the opportunity to sharpen skills. So to all those HOA hampered individuals, come on out and have a good time.

## **New Addition To the Website**

Tom, N3ARX, (our website keeper) has added some great information to the club's website entitled "Winter Weather Preparedness". It is available for viewing on the club's website and at <https://kc3arc.org/winter-weather-preparedness/> under the 'Activities' tab. Take time to check it out and to explore the website in general, as Tom has done an excellent job.

## **Volunteers On The Air**

In the Section Manager's column John made mention of Volunteers on the Air (VOTA) and made mention of details in the January issue of QST. Think about taking part in the event, which lasts for the year, but we only have W1AW/3 for two weeks. Think about helping someone get their contact with Delaware. Below is the post of members that came from the ARRL;

All: Part of the Volunteers On The Air (VOTA) operating event and contest (see page 77 Jan QST) will have each section able to use the flagship callsign W1AW for two, one week, sessions during the year. We need volunteers to operate "W1AW portable 3 in DE" on all Bands and Modes (except 60, 30, and 17 Meters), and that is HF through SHF. No repeater contacts, For V/U/SHF it must be simplex, but again any mode. I believe it is important that we do this to include the Tech licensees in this operating event.

Joe Grib, KI3B, the Asst Section Manager will be coordinating the schedule for the DE Section that starts the 18th of January for our first week. So let him know ASAP (KI3B@arrl.net) if you are interested.

So, here's your chance to operate as W1AW, at least for a little while. You, for a brief time, will be the DX!

John, K3PFW

## Words to the Wise

This one was suggested by Ward Silver, N0AX: Dumbfangled -- An old Scottish word that means physically or mentally worn out. "May be appropriate after a contest."

Old Hams never die, they just phase array.

To catch a polar bear, you first cut a hole in the ice, next you put peas all around the hole so then when the bear comes to take a "pea" you kick him in the "ice hole!"

## Happenings at the Rehoboth Marathon.....

### The 2022 Rehoboth Rainathon Marathon

It was a dark and stormy morning when Lucy (my Go-Kit on wheels) and I pulled out of the driveway at 0601 local time for our appointment with destiny at Cape Henlopen State Park. The drive down was uneventful, until I pulled into the driveway of the Park Office—my designated position for the race. As I stepped down into a puddle, I was greeted by a Park Ranger's booming warning, "You can't park there!" Innocently, I asked, "Where can I park?" "Parking lot 'bout a half mile down the road," was his still not very friendly reply. After a brief explanation of who I was and why I was there he gazed upon all the antennas growing out of my truck and said, "I guess you want to be near the truck?" "Yes," I replied, quickly adding that it would make my morning a lot easier.

He mellowed after that, but said, "You can't stay there—you block my line of sight." Wanting to appear helpful, I suggested another spot in front of the office on the other side of the running path. "Nope, there's a hump there—you can't park on a hump!" I suggested another spot. "Nope, septic tank. You can't park on a septic tank." I was quickly sensing a pattern developing. I looked across the driveway at a space under a large pine tree. "Think you can fit over there?" he queried—much more friendly now. "Yes, I quickly responded. If it's OK for me to drive along that stretch of the path?" I took my cue as he turned and walked away.

The rain was already falling when another person came in and pulled up past the Park Office mailbox, turned onto that road and parked. I was expecting to hear a challenge but instead it was a friendly greeting—this was a Park Volunteer, known to the Ranger. The three of us got well acquainted on that soggy and cold morning.

As the race began, we each volunteered whatever information we received, and the contest was on! Who could get the most accurate information the quickest? Ham radio won that contest without even working up a sweat.

As the morning progressed so did the rain. About 1015L the last two runners passed our location. The other two went on to new assignments and I was, happily, informed that my services were no longer needed at that location, and I could head for home and dry clothes.

Well folks -- "That's my story and I'm stickin' to it!"

Submitted by,  
Doug Covert / KB3PRW

P.S. There were over 900 runners

No serious injuries and no deaths

The winner crossed the finish line in 2 hours and 27 minutes

My HT worked reasonably well until the windscreen on my mike got waterlogged and I had to switch to the mobile (I had two other HTs and spare batteries, but only one headset with me)



## Useless Facts of the Month

There are more fake flamingos in the world than real ones. (Almost like politicians)

Theophilus Van Kannel invented revolving doors because he hated opening doors for women. (He probably really because couldn't read "push" and "pull")

Boanthropy is a psychological disorder where people think they're cows. (And some really are!)  
Facebook engineers originally wanted to call the "Like" button the "Awesome" button. (I knew they were thinking about me the whole time!)

As a society, we take more pictures in two minutes today than were taken in the entire 19th century.  
(Can anyone say "cheese")

The world's deepest postbox is in Susami Bay in Japan. It's 10 meters underwater. (Scuba diving is a required job prerequisite, or someone who can really hold their breath)

## Tidbit of Information of the Month Department

### Amateur Radio Club Provides Communications Support for Thanksgiving Day Race

The BEARS of Manchester Amateur Radio Club in Manchester, Connecticut, spent Thanksgiving Day providing amateur radio communications support for the 86th Manchester Road Race. The race, a **4.748-mile course** that begins and ends on Main Street in downtown Manchester, has been a Thanksgiving Day tradition since 1927. This is the 30th consecutive year the BEARS of Manchester Amateur Radio Club has provided communications support, with more than **10,000 runners** participating and over 30,000 spectators lining the course.

Radio operators began arriving at 6:00 AM on Thanksgiving morning. **Fifty-five operators** staffed 39 positions around the course and were stationed every quarter mile to provide safety communications and report the lead male and female runners to the public address announcer. Shadow operators helped 10 race officials stay in communications. Operators also started and ran four clocks around the course to help pace runners, and a station operated in the public safety Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to relay safety-related information to representatives of various agencies. Ham radio operators also provided communication for a shuttle bus operation that brought runners and spectators from a remote parking area to Main Street and then returned them at the end of the race. Check-in and check-out were accomplished through a net control station to maintain accountability.

Communication for the event was made on six repeater and simplex frequencies, and three cross-band repeaters were used for signal quality to avoid interference. The BEARS of Manchester Amateur Radio Club is an ARRL Affiliated Club.

Thanks to Phil Crombie, Jr., K1XFC, Race Communications Coordinator, for providing information for this story.

Thanks to the ARRL Letter



## **Rep. Lesko Introduces Bill to Replace Symbol Rate Limit with Bandwidth Limit**

Congresswoman Debbie Lesko (AZ-08) introduced a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives (H.R. 9664) on December 21, 2022, to require that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) replace the current HF digital symbol rate limit with a 2.8 kHz bandwidth limit.

After being petitioned by ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio® in 2013 (RM-11708) for the same relief, in 2016 the Commission issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (WT Docket No. 16-239) in which it agreed that the HF symbol rate limit was outmoded, served no purpose, and hampered experimentation. But the Commission questioned whether any bandwidth limit was needed in its place. Most amateurs, including the ARRL, objected to there being no signal bandwidth limit in the crowded HF bands given the possibility that unreasonably wide bandwidth digital protocols could be developed, and since 2016 there has been no further FCC action.

In conjunction with introducing the legislation, Congresswoman Lesko stated that "With advances in our modern technology, increased amounts of data can be put on the spectrum, so there is less of a need for a regulatory limit on symbol rates. I am pleased to introduce this important piece of legislation to update the FCC's rules to support the critical role amateur radio operators play and better reflect the capabilities of our modern radio technology."

ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR, hailed the introduction of the bill. Roderick stated that "the FCC's delay in removing this outdated restriction has been incomprehensible, given that the biggest effect of the delay is to require totally inefficient spectrum use on the already-crowded amateur HF bands. I hope that the Commission will act to remove this harmful limitation without waiting for the bill to be passed."

ARRL Legislative Committee Chairman John Robert Stratton, N5AUS, added that "the symbol rate limit hampers experimentation and development of more efficient HF data protocols by U.S. amateurs. For all practical purposes the field has been ceded to amateurs outside the U.S., where there is no comparable limit. Removing the restriction not only will allow U.S. amateurs to use the most efficient data protocol suitable for their purpose, but it also will promote and incentivize U.S. amateurs to experiment with and develop even more efficient protocols."

ARRL is the National Association for Amateur Radio®. Founded in 1914 as The American Radio Relay League, ARRL is a noncommercial organization of radio amateurs. ARRL numbers within its ranks the vast majority of active radio amateurs (or "hams") in the U.S., and has a proud history of achievement as the standard-bearer in promoting and protecting amateur radio. For more information about ARRL and amateur radio, visit [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org).

A copy of this press release is available from ARRL:

[www.arrl.org/news/rep-lesko-introduces-bill-to-replace-symbol-rate-limit-with-bandwidth-limit](http://www.arrl.org/news/rep-lesko-introduces-bill-to-replace-symbol-rate-limit-with-bandwidth-limit)

## **Rep. Bill Johnson Introduces Bill to Eliminate Private Land Use Restrictions on Amateur Radio**

Congressman Bill Johnson (OH-6) introduced a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives (H.R.9670) on Thursday, December 22, 2022, to eliminate private land use restrictions that prohibit, restrict, or impair the ability of an Amateur Radio Operator from operating and installing amateur station antennas on property subject to the control of the Amateur Radio Operator.

The exponential growth of communities subject to private land use restrictions that prohibit both the operation of Amateur Radio and the installation of amateur station antennas has significantly restricted

the growth of the Amateur Radio Service. These restrictions are pervasive in private common interest residential communities such as single-family subdivisions, condominiums, cooperatives, gated communities, master-planned communities, planned unit developments, and communities governed by community associations. The restrictions have particularly impacted the ability of Amateur Radio to fulfill its statutorily mandated duty of serving as a voluntary noncommercial emergency communications service.

Congress in 1996 directed the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to promulgate regulations (Public Law 104-104, title II, section 207, 110 Stat. 114; 47 U.S.C. 303 note) that have preempted all private land use restrictions applicable to exterior communications facilities that impair the ability of citizens to receive television broadcast signals, direct broadcast satellite services, or multichannel multipoint distribution services, or to transmit and receive wireless internet services. ARRL attempts to obtain similar relief for Amateur Radio were rejected by the FCC with a statement such relief would have to come from Congress.

ARRL Legislative Advocacy Committee Chairman John Robert Stratton, N5AUS, noted that Congress, in 1994 by Joint Resolution, S.J.Res.90/H.J.Res.199, declared that regulations at all levels of government should facilitate and encourage the effective operation of Amateur Radio from residences as a public benefit. He continued by stating that "H.R.9670, the Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act, is intended to fulfill that mandate and preserve the ability of Amateur Radio Operators to continue to serve as a key component of American critical communications infrastructure."

ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR, and Mr. Stratton both extended on behalf of the ARRL, its Members, and the Amateur Radio community their thanks and appreciation for the leadership of Rep. Johnson in his tireless efforts to support and protect the rights of all Amateur Radio Operators

Thanks to ARRL news and bulletins

## **History and Development of the Navy Knob**

By George I. Levy, NC2M 26325 I recently decided to research a bit about the so-called Navy Knob that many straight key enthusiasts, such as myself, like to use. When I was a Ham Pup, I was told that it was developed by the US Navy as a way to reduce operator fatigue because the knob could be gripped underneath the upper knob, with fingers on the lower ring, and the operator could use the entire forearm to send. Perhaps that's how it ended up getting used, but that's not the real reason for the knob. And, ever the "gotta know the answer" techno-nerd, I decided to put the internet to good use and find out about the history of this little device.

The knob was invented by a gentleman named Louis Steinberger, who lived on Beverley Road in Brooklyn. Steinberger was characterized in the 1926 Who's Who in American Jewry as "the Jewish Edison," and he had many patents to his name. He specialized in insulators - some of his insulator inventions, or descendant products, are still in use today, e.g. the end insulator that looks like a cylinder with holes at each end. Many of his products were manufactured by his Electrose Manufacturing Company in Brooklyn.

Now, picture the year of 1918. Today, our telegraph keys are merely closing a switch inside the transmitter, and operate at low voltage, but 100 years ago, during the spark era, that was not the case. Morse operators had much higher voltages running through their telegraph keys, with their fingers perilously close to the contacts. Mr. Steinberger figured out that there needed to be a larger disk on which an operator's fingers could rest, thus protected from accidentally touching the key contacts. And, so, he created his knob, with the larger disk under the smaller knob, and filed for US patent 1348249 in January of 1918.

World War I was raging, and the US Navy apparently thought the invention was a great idea, so started using the invention on its keys, despite the fact that the patent wasn't actually granted until August of 1920. And it would seem that the knob was a huge success - keeping hands safe and/or reducing fatigue - so the Navy continued using it, and the knob made its way into civilian applications, too, even after spark transmitting was banned. Mr. Steinberger, I believe, died in 1934, and the patent expired three years later. How many knobs would be used during World War II, with telegraph operators unaware of how and why they came to be? How many are still in civilian use today? Here's a link to the patent: <https://patents.google.com/patent/US1348249A/en> So, when we're using our straight keys, perhaps during a Sprint, we can think of Mr. Steinberger and his century-old invention that still helps us today.

## **The Last CW Message Sent by the US Coast Guard**

By Jerry Proc VE3FAB

The United States Coast Guard has closed down all CW operations. Here is the final message sent by station NMN from Chesapeake Virginia, at 0001Z on April 1, 1995;

CQ CQ CQ DE NMN NMN BT 0 010001Z APR 95 FM COGARD CAMSLANT CHESAPEAKE VA/NMN TO ALL BT USCG NOW CLOSING DOWN CONTINUOUS HF CW WATCH CEASING ALL MORSE CODE OPS IN THE HF BAND. AS WE CONCLUDE OUR WATCH WE WISH THE MARITIME COMMUNITY FAIR WINDS AND FOLLOWING SEAS. WE ARE PROUD OF OUR TRADITION AND LONG STANDING SERVICE TO THE MARINER ON MORSE CODE BEGINNING IN 1901 WITH THE REVENUE CUTTER SERVICE EXPERIMENTING WITH WIRELESS AS A MEANS TO COMMUNICATE ON LAND AND SEA TO THE FIRST MORSE CODE RADIO INSTALLED ABOARD CUTTER GRANT IN 1903. OUR ORIG COMMS MISSION WAS TO RCV DISTRESS ALERTS. BUT SINCE 1901 THE CG HAS FAITHFULLY AND DILIGENTLY LISTENED FOR TRAFFIC RESPONDING TO HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF CALLS FM MARINERS IN NEED OF ASSIST OR RPTG POSITION WX NAV OR SAFETY INFO. OVER THE YRS WE HAVE PROVIDED MARINERS WITH URGENT SAFETY AND NAV WARNINGS OVER HF CW AND RCVD VESSEL LOCATION UPDATES FOR THE AMVER SYS. WE WILL FEEL A SENSE OF LOSS WITH THE PASSING OF CW. THE NEED FOR OPERATORS WITH SENSITIVE EARS AND A FAST PRECISE KEY WILL BE REPLACED BY COMPUTERS MODEMS AND AUTO ALARMS. THE SPECIAL EMOTION AND EXCITEMENT ENJOYED BY CW OPERATORS CANNOT BE DUPLICATED AND THE CHILLING SOS SIGNAL WILL NEVER AGAIN BE RCVD BY A CG UNIT. BUT CW HAS RUN ITS COURSE AND NOW WE LOOK FWD TO SERVING YOU ON THE NEXT GENERATION OF COMM SYSTEMS VIA THE GMDSS. FM ALL CG TELECOMM SPECIALISTS WE BID YOU A 73. WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT. SIGNED CG CAMSLANT. BT DE NMN SK \*\*\*\*\*

Note About The Final Message It was sent on 5870, 8470, 12718.5 and 16975 khz simultaneously. The message on 5870 khz was sent by tape. For all other frequencies, it was sent at 25 wpm by hand. A tape machine sent the message around 15 wpm and it was the last one to finish. There were minor errors in the message sent on 8470 khz as compared to the official copy. This was likely caused by the 200 or so observers who had their eyes on the lone CW operator, TC3 S. Morales. In spite of this, he did a wonderful job. When the last did and dah were sent, there was silence - and the realization of the end of an era.

Thanks to the SKCC Rag Chew

## **Maryland Approves School District Plan for Virtual Snow Days**

Maryland has approved Frederick County Public Schools' plan to conduct up to three days of virtual instruction per year on snow days, but the district hasn't decided how it will implement the idea.

(TNS) — The Maryland State Department of Education has approved Frederick County Public Schools' plan to conduct up to three days of virtual instruction per year on snow days, but the district hasn't decided how it will implement the idea. The Frederick County Board of Education last discussed the topic in October and decided not to give it the green light until it collected more feedback from the community. At that point, the plan — which would give students asynchronous assignments to complete either virtually or on paper during up to three snow days — still needed approval from the state.

In a countywide email sent Thursday, the district said it had secured that approval and would present "an additional update" at the next board meeting on Jan. 11. No asynchronous virtual days will occur before that date, the email said. "If schools need to be closed due to inclement weather between now and then, it would lead to traditional inclement weather days with no instruction," the message said.

The last day of school for FCPS students is currently set for June 1. Without virtual snow days, each inclement weather day the school system uses would tack a day on to the school year — for up to five days. Having students complete some work on a few snow days per year could "mitigate disruption to learning mid-year, minimize additional days at the end of the school year when instruction may be less meaningful and keep students connected," FCPS' email on Thursday said. "Assignments would be available with or without the use of technology and can be completed on a family's schedule," the message said. "Attendance would be taken via log of students accessing courses via Schoology and through the completion of assigned work."

At a school board meeting in October, FCPS officials reviewed survey results showing how 2,300 respondents felt about the proposal. Of those, about two-thirds — 1,512 — supported the idea. The other 760 were opposed. Those who were opposed mainly fell into two camps, the results showed. Some didn't like the idea of infringing on the tradition of snow days, while others said they'd resist the district embracing anything that resembled pandemic-era virtual learning.

The district has said the idea would be most useful in the case of significant snowstorms, when schools close for multiple days in a row. Ideally, officials said, the virtual snow days would be planned a few days in advance.

© 2022 The Frederick News-Post (Frederick, Md.). Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Thanks to Government technology on line

## **Joke of the Month**

### **Stats Professor**

A stats professor plans to travel to a conference by plane. When he passes the security check, they discover a bomb in his carry-on-baggage. Of course, he is hauled off immediately for interrogation.

"I don't understand it!" the interrogating officer exclaims. "You're an accomplished professional, a caring family man, a pillar of your parish - and now you want to destroy that all by blowing up an airplane!"

"Sorry", the professor interrupts him. "I had never intended to blow up the plane."

"So, for what reason else did you try to bring a bomb on board?!"

"Let me explain. Statistics show that the probability of a bomb being on an airplane is 1/1000. That's quite high if you think about it - so high that I wouldn't have any peace of mind on a flight."

"And what does this have to do with you bringing a bomb on board a plane?"

"You see, since the probability of one bomb being on my plane is  $1/1000$ , the chance that there are two bombs is  $1/1000000$ . If I already bring one, the chance of another bomb being around is actually  $1/1000000$ , and I am much safer"

## **Quote of the Month**

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."

-Benjamin Franklin