

SHORT CIRCUITS

Newsletter of the Kent County Amateur Radio Club

April 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
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 April Fools' Day

Happenings

April 11	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
April 13	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
April 15	Sussex Hamfest, more below
April 16	Coastal Running Festival, Rehoboth Area, more below
April 24	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
April 29	VE Testing, Wyoming Methodist Church, 09:00
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 10	VE Testing, Wyoming Methodist Church, 09:00
June 13	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
June 24-25	ARRL Field Day, details forthcoming
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 8	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
August 10	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
August 28	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
September 9	VE Testing, Wyoming Methodist Church, 09:00
September 12	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
September 14	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
September 25	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
October 10	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
October 12	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
October 30	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
November 9	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
November 14	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
November 27	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
December 9	VE Testing, Wyoming Methodist Church, 09:00

Hamfests

- April 15 **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
Talk-In: 146.090 156.7 **Website:** <http://www.radioelectronicsexpo.com/>
- April 23 **Maryland Mobileers Spring Hamfest**
Maryland Mobileers Amateur Radio Club
Odenton Volunteer Fire Company, 1425 Annapolis Road, Odenton, MD 21113
Contact: Bruce McPherson , AB3AC, 815 Quartz Flake Ct. Odenton, MD 21113
Phone: 410-456-2500 **Talk-In:** 146.805/107.2
Email: BMCPHERSON73@VERIZON.NET
- May 19-21 **Dayton Hamvention, ARRL Great Lakes Division Convention**
Dayton Amateur Radio Association
Greene County Fairgrounds and Expo Center, 120 Fairgrounds Road, Xenia, OH 45385
Contact: Jim Gifford , KD8APT, PO Box 964 Dayton, OH 45401, Phone: 937-276-6930
Talk-In: 146.94 123.0 pl alt 146.985 123.9 pl **Email:** Media@hamvention.org
- May 28 **Memorial Day Hamfest**
Maryland FM Association, Inc
Howard County FairGrounds, 2210 Fairgrounds Road, West Friendship , MD 21794
Contact:John Elgin , WA3MNN, 518 Copley Lane Silver Spring, MD 20904
Phone: 301-641-5313 **Talk-In:**146.76/224.76/444.0 CTCSS 107.2
Email: marylandfm@verizon.net
- June 18 **Father's Day Hamfest at Arcadia**
Baltimore Amateur Radio Club
Arcadia Fairgrounds, 16920 Carnival Ave., Upperco, MD 21155
Contact: David Shadwell , AB3TE, P.O.Box 120 Reisterstown, MD 21136
Phone: 443-379-1495 **Talk-In:** 146.67 PL 107.2 **Email:** W3FT67@yahoo.com
- July 29 **CVARC 2023 Hamfest, ARRL Pennsylvania State Convention**
Cumberland Valley Amateur Radio Club
CVAEMA Show grounds, 1501 Criders Church Road, Chambersburg, PA 17201
Contact: Jim Stephens , KB3ICU, 183 N. 4th St. Chambersburg, PA 17201-1625
Phone: 717-504-7684 **Talk-In:** 147.120 + 100hz **Email:** cvarcw3ach@gmail.com

More hamfests listed at www.arrl.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.

Editor's Comments

Daylight savings Time (DST) is something that is being debated as keeping it all the time. There would be no more "changing of the clocks" in the Spring and Fall. No "spring forward" and "fall back" if there is enough support in Congress to pass this legislation. That shall be seen. But such a move would have prevented the interesting clock adventure I have had.

I have one of those "radio controlled" clocks that gets set by WWV. I brought it from a now out of business store when I got into amateur radio in 1991. For the last thirty-one years the clock has worked somewhat fine. I say somewhat because the clock rarely changed on the day it should have. It was always a week or so late, but would always have the minute and second exactly on with the time standard stations, WWV (Colorado), WWVH (Hawaii), and CHU (Canada). The time would eventually come around to either the proper EST or DST hour.

Well, this year has been an experience! The clock, for the first time, changed on the proper day, March 12, but the time went BACK an hour. So now it was TWO hours off. Minute and second exactly on time, just the hour being off. So I figured the battery was going bad and changed the battery. This causes the clock to "reset" and needs to get the signal from WWV at 0200 (two in the morning for those not up on the 24 hour clock). Well, the clock "reset" and again the minute and seconds were exactly correct, however the clock was now FIVE hours off!

OK, so I will try again. Reset the clock and hang it on the wall, and now it is SIX hours off, so I am keeping the time it is in Honolulu, Hawaii! It would be nice to be in Honolulu and I'm sure that many readers would wish I was in Honolulu, however I don't want to know the time there. I wonder if any other "radio controlled" clock owners are having the same problem or after 31 faithful years of somewhat flawless operation my clock has gone Tango Uniform? It's strange, the minutes and seconds are exactly correct, I'm just in Honolulu!

Even though it is just the first of April, plans for Field Day should be on the minds of people planning a successful event. Field Day used to be a big deal for KCARC when I joined in 1991, and would follow the ideas of F.E. Handy, W1BDI (SK), who wrote in the June 1933 issue of QST; "Besides being an opportunity to get out in the open in this fine spring weather, the real object of this **contest** is to test "portables" wherever they may be available. If successful, we want to make it an annual affair."

Obviously it was successful and Field Day has become an "annual affair". It can be seen that Field Day was thought of as a contest and is treated as a contest by many, keeping the original ideals of the event alive. Also W1BDI knew that contesters were some of the better traffic handlers and would be needed in an emergency.

Looking at three of the top stations in the 2022 Field Day, one was a group of three people that made 1439 contacts and a single person effort that yielded 1325 contacts. The three person group had a three element tri-bander at 40 feet, and a double Zepp wire. The single person operation was a full size 40 meter vertical and an 80 meter dipole fed with open-wire line. The common part to each of the two people who responded was length of operation. They worked at least 22 of the 24 hours.

So it's easy, want to have a good Field Day score? Then get in the seat and operate, put those radios on the air! This year there have been some rule changes. First, no FT8 "robots" radios should be operated by a real person. Second, A, B and C class stations can use up to 500 watts, up from the 100 allowed last year. And finally, all contacts from a GOTA station are worth 5 points, no matter the mode used. Last year KCARC did not have a GOTA, no interest.

Let's look at the new rules and start planning for this year's Field Day and plan on making a good score!

President's Column

All,

I just wanted to thank everyone for going out of your way to welcome our newest student members Gavin and Hunter. Keeping with the student subject it is proposed by the membership to establish a special under 18 years of age membership at \$15.00 yearly. This will require amending the constitution and by-laws.

So, I'm giving notice that we are going to vote on this amendment in the June meeting giving all a time to digest and plan on implementing this amendment.

73,

To All Paul Tuley

Vice-President's Column

Truly, the devil is in the details. Little things that are missed can cause problems. That's why pilots always use checklists even for things that they do hundreds of times – to prevent landing with their wheels up.

On HF I participate in SSB traffic nets, digital nets using Fldigi, and other modes like FT8 and SSTV (Slow Scan Television-ed) all using my IC-7300. Transceiver setups need to be changed between modes. Most of the time the software takes care of things but sometimes mistakes happen.

On a recent Sunday morning I logged into the Pennsylvania NBEMS NVIS net using Flrig to control the transmitter and Fldigi for the content. No problems there. Later that same Sunday I was net control for the Delmarva Emergency Net and used the tune button on the transceiver to adjust the manual antenna tuner. The tune button sets the power to 10 watts and sends about a 10 second CW tone. Everything worked fine and the SWR meter showed the appropriate power and SWR.

At exactly 1830 I started the net preamble, went through my spiel and when I released the PTT button I heard another station asking if he needed to start the net because I was not present! I immediately knew what had happened. Flrig had set my mic level to zero during the digital session earlier in the day and I had forgotten to reset it to the proper value. It didn't show up when I did the tuning because the signal was CW and not SSB. I reset it and did the net starting about a minute late.

I did two things wrong. First, I should have checked the radio settings and, second, I should have noticed no power output on the SWR meter right away. Certainly not as catastrophic as landing with your wheels up but still embarrassing.

73,

Jim KC3BTV

VP KCARC

From the Section Manager's Shack

Delaware Section Convention and Ham Fest

It's coming! April 15! The ARRL Delaware Section Convention and a HamFest, in Georgetown at the Cheer Center. This is something you don't want to miss. The new ARRL Division Director Robert "Bob" Famiglio, K3RF and Vice Director, Mary Pittinger KB3MXM will be at the 11:00 ARRL Forum for your Questions and Answers. As Section Manager I will be addressing the 10:00 ARRL Forum on activities and issues in the Delaware Section, along with our Assistant Section Manager, Joe Grib, NI3B. There will also be an ARRL Booth with people to answer questions about the ARRL and membership. The ARRL is the national and an international advocate for amateur radio, and can use your support.

The HamFest will have vendors and "tailgaters" with a variety of offerings. Everybody should find something to take home with them. The Sussex Amateur radio Association, is sponsoring the event, and will have great door prize drawings. Not a ham yet, or want to upgrade, there will be VE Testing available shortly after noon.

If all of the above is not a reason to come out, let me add then the opportunity to socialize with your local and not so local ham friends that will be there. And, there will be food! Looking forward to seeing you there.

The Emcomm Corner

Thank you to all who participated in the Pops in the Dark exercise on March 4-8. We had 16 nets over the 5 day exercise with a total of 18 stations participating including 6 different net control stations. The nets averaged 9 stations and the average station checked into a net 8 times. We successfully ran both VHF and HF connections. Kent County Public Safety let us use their generator at the 97 repeater which was a good exercise of that capability. The officials at Kent County Public Safety were pleased with our participation. We will have more exercises in the future now that the weather is warming up.

Please take advantage of the opportunities to work with the Sussex EMComm group in the upcoming Coastal Delaware Running Festival on April 16. There is a need for fixed, mobile and bicycle units with much of the course in Cape Henlopen State Park. If you can help, contact Bill, N3ID at ws3eoc@gmail.com with CODEL2023 in the subject line.

73,
Jim KC3BTV
Kent County Emergency Coordinator

AUXCOMM News

The April 1 st AUXCOMM Update

Well, the lights are on! Thanks to all who took part in POPS in the DARK between Mar 4 th and Mar 8 th . This multi-day exercise tested the ability of participating hams to operate utilizing auxiliary power sources for a simulated extended utility power outage. Battery backup, vehicles, generators, and solar charging were some of the means utilized by those who chose to play along. Sussex and Kent EOC's, and local SKYWARN had a busy first day of the exercise. Hoping that some lessons were learned, and everyone will be just a bit better prepared when the real thing crosses our peninsula.

Sussex AUXCOMM will again be supporting the Mobile Command Unit for the annual Coastal Delaware

Running Festival (CODEL) on Sunday, April 16 th . We need volunteer operators who are willing to help cover this 26-mile Full Marathon course by observing, assisting, and reporting via amateur radio. Please consider giving your time in service to our community. As of this writing we have 8 fewer volunteers than this time last year. Let's catch that up. Contact ws3eoc@gmail.com to get on the roster and receive further information.

Sussex County AUXCOMM meets the 2 nd Thursday of each month at 7:30pm in the training room of the Emergency Operations Center, 21911 Rudder Lane, Georgetown. Attendance is open to anyone interested in our role in assisting emergency communications. Visit our website <http://www.sussexradio.com> or email ws3eoc@gmail.com for further information. And now for some special news...

The POTA (Parks On The Air) program has been wildly successful in getting amateurs out to operate in parks all over the country. So much so that some are reportedly running out of new parks to "conquer". Also, some park officials may have expressed concerns about the bumper crop of antennas sprouting up in parks all over. In order to relieve pressure on the over-radiated parks and provide new territory for POTA-heads to continue their quests, a new program has been developed that is sure to be a hit!

Welcome to PLOTA (Parking Lots On The Air)! This new program will expand on the success of POTA by opening up many new Target locations (literally) for field operations. What POTA has been for parks, PLOTA will be for parking lots, and there are way more "lots" than parks just waiting to be tamed! From the smallest fast food joint to the largest mega-mall... Activate them all! Amateurs can get fired up over the new award programs like WAW (Worked All Walmarts), TAT (Tagged All Targets), and the coveted B 4 (Bagged Bed, Bath & Beyond). Look for all the great PLOTA gear (hats, shirts, etc) coming soon. 73's, and good hunting!

Bill, N3ID

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Club Happenings

Coastal Delaware Running Festival (CODEL2023) - Call for Volunteers

Sussex County AUXCOMM and the Sussex County Mobile Command Unit (MCU) will again be supporting the 2023 Coastal Delaware Running Festival (CODEL) on Sunday, April 16th. This annual event features a Full Marathon, a Half Marathon, and a 9K race all occurring Sunday morning on a shared course that winds from the Rehoboth Boardwalk, through Cape Henlopen State Park, into downtown Lewes, and back. The Full Marathon kicks off at 7am and must be completed by 1:45pm.

We need Amateur Radio Operators to cover stations along the course who can observe progress of the race(s), provide assistance to the runners, and report incidents and information to the MCU. Positions can be available that will accommodate limited walking and flexible start/end times. Almost half of the Full Marathon occurs on trails within Cape Henlopen State Park. We have found that having operators who can be mobile via bicycle helps in covering these, sometimes, remote areas, so if you are interested in bike positions we can put you to good use. We can also use non-licensed volunteers who could be teamed with a licensed operator. This is a great opportunity to serve the community and show the public what Amateur Radio in action looks like.

To indicate interest in serving for this event and to receive further information, please respond to this email or send an email to ws3eoc@gmail.com with CODEL2023 in the subject line.

73's!
Bill, N3ID

Rules Changes Announced for 2023 ARRL Field Day

A new 500 W peak envelope power (PEP) transmitter output category has been introduced for Class A, B, and C stations only. Changes to the Get on the Air (GOTA) station scoring have also been made this year. Contacts made from the GOTA station are worth 5 points, regardless of mode, with no limit to the number of contacts that can be made. Stations can earn a GOTA Coach bonus of 100 points for having a coach supervise at least 10 of the contacts made and logged at the GOTA station.

In addition, changes have been made to the Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC) section list. The Maritime (MAR) Section has been eliminated, making New Brunswick (NB) and Nova Scotia (NS) individual sections. The Greater Toronto Area section has been renamed Golden Horseshoe (GS) and Northern Territories has been renamed Territories (TER). Participants should make sure their logging software has been updated to reflect these changes. For a complete list of ARRL/RAC Sections, see <https://contests.arrl.org/contestmultipliers.php?a=wve>.

ARRL Field Day will be held on June 24 - 25, 2023. For more information and complete rules, visit <https://www.arrl.org/field-day>.

Amateurs Achieve SKCC Awards

It is pleased to note that Dave, KC3AM, has made 100 contacts with other Straight Key Century Club (SKCC) members and has achieved the status of "Centurion", thus his member number is now 22014C. His next level will be Tribute after 50 more member contacts. Congratulations Dave!

Also Jerry, N3KRX, has been awarded the "Rag Chew" award, obtaining 300 minutes of QSO's lasting at least 30 minutes. Next step is "Rag Chew at 600 minutes" which will come soon.

Take a look at the SKCC website at www.skccgroup.com for more information on all the fun one can have working "slow" speed CW.

Interesting Facts of the Month

Cenosilicaphobia is the fear of an empty beer glass (a distinct fear of most of the people I know!)

The 2011 earthquake near Japan increased the Earth's rotation speed, shortening the day by 1.8 microseconds. (I knew my sleep was shorter!)

Contrary to popular belief, the fortune cookie did not originate in China. It is actually an American invention that originated in California. In 1914, a Japanese-American named Makoto Hagiwara of the Japanese Tea Garden in San Francisco introduced the first fortune cookie. Although a number of families in Los Angeles, primarily of Japanese descent, have also claimed credit for inventing the cookie, a federal judge of the Court of Historical Review determined that the cookie originated in San Francisco and acknowledged Makoto Hagiwara as its creator.

Tid Bit of Information of the Month Department

Statement From Our Division Director

Many Atlantic Division members contacted me in the last few days with concerns about the new Field Day (FD) rule regarding points for CW contacts implemented by the ARRL Programs & Services Committee (PSC). Almost all of the comments I received were against the change equalizing contact points for any mode. Many of you writing took the time to explain your reasons for your concern which was helpful. Some of the respondents were writing as designated representatives of their ARRL club. I

responded to as many of you as I could personally explaining why I agreed the change is unwarranted and I shared your concerns.

Tonight the ARRL PSC held a special meeting for the purpose of reconsidering the changes in view of the members' strong interest. Though I am not appointed to the PSC, I attended as an interested director to provide comment and was allowed to do so. The rules for mode scoring will NOT change this year. Further, the PSC will be considering members input before next year. There may be formal electronic polling to assess the members comments further before next year's Field Day.

Also, the committee voted to conform FD rules with other contest rules by banning both robotic FT-x operations and the use of automated multi-streaming operations. Details are forthcoming.

This responsiveness demonstrates that the Committee heard all of the members expressing their thoughts. You had an impact. There will be time to debate changes over the next months and I urge you to make your thoughts known when that time comes. In the end, our League is a member organization and members interests should drive our direction whether major policy or simple rule changes for contests. If you disagree with this statement, please feel free to let me know. I will respond. After all, the ARRL is your League.

73 & I will see you on the radio.

Bob Famiglio, K3RF
ARRL Director - Atlantic Division

Radio Merit Badge Sees Biggest Gain in Scouting

According to a Scouting magazine study of Merit Badges earned in 2022, Radio had the biggest jump. It is now the 81st most popular Merit Badge, up from being 98th in 2021. Trailing just behind it on the biggest gains list is the Electronics Merit Badge, which jumped 15 spots, from 80th to 65th. To earn the rank of Eagle Scout, members must earn 21 badges, 14 of which are standard. The Scout gets to choose the remaining badges based on personal interests.

Many Scouts take part in Jamboree on the Air, which is being held October 20 - 23, 2023.

Thanks to ARRL Letter

Scenario Tests Response for Mass Public Emergency

The federally funded, four-day training event put participants through the paces of a hypothetical scenario. After setting the stage with a mass public emergency, teams dove into tabletop simulations to role play how they would respond.

March 01, 2023 • Eligiah Thornton, The Mountaineer, Waynesville, N.C.

(TNS) - Over 100 emergency management officers from across the state gathered at Lake Junaluska last week to test how well they would fare in a crisis or natural disaster. The federally funded, four-day training event put participants through the paces of a hypothetical scenario. After setting the stage with a mass public emergency, teams dove into tabletop simulations to role play how they would respond, while also gaining credentials in the field of emergency management. The workroom was something out of a Hollywood film. Armed with computers and whiteboards, the buzz of adrenaline filled the air as participants working against the clock to resolve the pretend crisis. "It's up to each team to decide on how they want to start tackling the incident and what resources they are asking for," said Allison Richmond, public information officer for Haywood County Emergency Services. Each team is given the same scenario with different roadblocks along the way. Faux resources can be ordered "to make it feel

more real," said Richmond.

Teams included law enforcement, emergency services, hospitals, forest management, public health and county administrators. Each person at the table played an essential role, one relying on the next to manage the disaster. "Team members were chosen by skill set and incident-specific positions with certain roles to fill — incident commander, logistics officer, public information officer, operations chief, down to smaller teams," said Richmond. "It gives them a chance to exercise their skills."

Relationship building

Every year, the training brings together members of the statewide incident management team, with different regions taking turns hosting the exercise. "We were fortunate to be chosen by state emergency management to host this year," said Cody Parton, assistant emergency management coordinator with Haywood Emergency Services. In fact, Haywood served as their host for the inaugural training in 2016 and every time it's been WNC's turn since then.

The statewide incident management team compiles the best of the best in emergency response in North Carolina and is designed to help local communities when large-scale disasters hit. The team not only handles natural disasters, but are also on scene for large sporting events, such as the Super Bowl. The N.C. IMT has also been deployed to hard hit areas such as the hurricane in Puerto Rico and the volcanic eruption in Hawaii, as well as other similar catastrophes outside of the state. "When the winds begin to blow, the fire begins to burn and the water begins to rise, it may go beyond the capabilities of a local entity," said Tommy Batson, emergency management director from Pender County who came to the training. "That's when the local entity will reach out to the state and request an Incident Management Team."

Batson said that relationship building during the training exercise will pay off should a real disaster strike. "We establish relationships and foster those, so we all know who we are working for when disaster happens," said Batson. "We would rather meet face to face prior to the event happening. The faster we can get the lights on, grocery stores open, water and sewer back on, the faster the people can get back to some normalcy in life. Almost no one handles a single incident all by themselves," Richmond added.

In a real-life scenario, an incident management team is pulled together from a qualified and credentialed pool of over 500 personnel from across the state. "The team that gets called in isn't necessarily a team that just sits somewhere," said Richmond. "The team is composed of people like us from all over the state who come together to form a team, then travel to wherever it is you need to go."

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Thanks to Government Technology online

National Emergency Preparedness

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has released a final version (March 2023) of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Functional Guidance. The guidance, which provides a framework for communications resources within incident management, officially includes support from amateur radio operators. The expanded Communications Unit (COMU) structure now includes the Auxiliary Communicator (AUXC) role, which covers personnel from services that provide communications support to emergency management, public safety, and other government agencies. This includes amateur radio.

NIMS guides government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to work together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters and other emergencies. "This is a major step in the recognition of the need and usefulness of amateur radio and other communications services in our

national preparedness," said Josh Johnston, KE5MHV, Director of Emergency Management for ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio®. "It also gives official guidance to pave the way for future training and education of volunteers in ARRL's Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®)," Johnston added.

The NIMS ICT guide (PDF) is available at

https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_ict-functional-guidance.pdf.

Thank to the ARRL Letter

Pa. Counties Say They Prepare for Rail Emergencies

(TNS) - A Norfolk Southern train carrying toxic vinyl chloride was heading to Johnstown before crashing in East Palestine, Ohio, local authorities said. "Without a doubt," said Art Martynuska, Cambria County Emergency Management Agency coordinator. "I don't know the exact route, but if it was on the main line some of that stuff would have come right through Johnstown," he said. As many as 60 trains a day travel through Johnstown and surrounding communities. The Ohio train would likely have stopped at Conway Yard, a major rail yard owned by Norfolk Southern and located about 20 miles north of Pittsburgh.

Railcars are separated onto other tracks. Trains could travel south through Confluence and through Johnstown en route to Harrisburg and other locations.

Other Cambria County communities on the Norfolk Southern rail line include Cresson Township, East Taylor Township, East Conemaugh Borough, Portage Borough, Portage Township, Gallitzin Borough, Tunnelhill Borough and South Fork Borough. Emergency responders in Cambria and Somerset counties prepare for such rail emergencies. "The unfriendly reminder is it can happen here just the same," said Joel Landis, Somerset County Emergency Management Agency director. "All incidents start and end on the local level," Landis said.

There are 180 miles of track in Somerset County and nearly 200 miles of track in Cambria County. Trains carry commodities and hazardous materials such as petroleum crude oil, propane and combustible liquid, Martynuska said. "There could be just about anything," Johnstown fire Chief Robert Statler said. Fire responders and county Hazardous Material teams prepare for train derailments. "Rail traffic is at an all-time high," Martynuska said.

Training includes dealing with HAZMAT emergencies. "The derailment in (East) Palestine, Ohio, we train for that," said Greg Schilling Jr., Cambria County public safety specialist. When the 911 call comes in, first responders are deployed. County HazMat teams are dispatched. State Department of Environmental Protection emergency personnel are notified. Hazmat teams must also monitor weather conditions. "Wind and rain would play a big factor," Schilling said. "We're responsible for response, mitigation, containment, confinement, not the cleanup of hazardous materials."

Rail lines pay for the eventual cleanup. Firefighters might need to evacuate neighborhoods and schools. "We have evacuation plans with transit and school bus lines," Martynuska said. "If we need mass evacuations, we can do that." Landis notes the role of first responders is critical during catastrophic events. "Additional help will take time to get here and the initial response will be crucial to the overall outcome of the event," he said.

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Thanks to Government Technology online

Another Word About EMP

This news release comes from the office of Senator Bob Hall

AUSTIN, TX) -- Senator Bob Hall (R-Edgewood), has been sounding the alarm of the threats to the United States from weapons designed to destroy the electrical grid since first elected to office in 2015.

In 2016, Senator Hall delivered a presentation to Enterprise Forum Texas that highlighted that the risk of an attack from an adversarial country could be delivered by way of a weather balloon.

"There are several very real threats to the power grid, and the consequences would be so severe that we should address this now," Hall said. "There are hostile countries that might cause this, but there are also natural forces that may also cause the same result soon. Either way, we need to be prepared."

For over a decade, experts have warned that the U.S. electric grid is vulnerable to physical, cyber, and electromagnetic pulse (EMP) threats. However, unlike physical and cyber, the threat from an EMP to the nation's electric grid has been all but ignored by the government and the electric industry.

The experts on the White House Commission on EMP concluded that one of the most likely high altitude nuclear (EMP) attacks would be delivered by a weather balloon.

"I appreciate this threat not just as an electrical engineer, but also as a former U.S. Air Force officer who led a project team to protect the Minuteman missile system from this very same threat. We also know that other nations like Israel, China, South Korea, and Russia are taking the necessary steps to protect their electrical grids," stated Hall.

We know for certain that the Chinese, as well as several other countries like Russia, Iran, and North Korea have in their war plans a pre-emptive EMP strike on the United States. They have told us this multiple times.

As we move forward in ensuring we have the electrical generation capacity to meet the growing demand, Texans deserve all electric generation capacity to be resilient to all known threats; Natural and man made.

Bob Hall is a Citadel graduate, an electrical engineer, a military veteran, and is currently ranked one of the most conservative State Senator in Texas. Bob and his wife, Kay, live in Van Zandt County and are members of Lakeside Baptist Church. Senator Hall represents Texas Senate District 2, which encompasses Kaufman, Navarro, Rockwall, Van Zandt, and parts of Dallas, Ellis, and Collin Counties.

WSPR (Whisper), or Is There Any Value to One Way Transmissions?

To be honest I thought "NO"! BUT..., I recently acquired a WSPR (Weak Signal Propagation Reporter) Desktop Transmitter from Zachteck.com. The transmitter operates 80-10 meters at 200 mW (1/5 of a watt) output on band(s) selectable via software. The transmitter ships with a magnetic mount GPS antenna with an RG-174 coax cable terminating in a SMA male connector. The HF antenna is up to the operator; more about this later. Power requirements are a modest 5VDC at 150 mA. For me, I put it in the car and connected it to my Outbacker Perth 8' tapped multi band HF mobile antenna. and plugged in the antennas "Wander Lead" into the 20m tap.

I turned on the WSPR Desktop transmitter and then accessed WSPRNet.org to see who was hearing my little signal. Over the first 30 minutes of transmitting, I had signal reports of the Northeast US, Southeast US, western Canada, central and east coast Canada, Denmark, and Luxembourg. Cool!

Shortly I will repeat the test at the same time of day, using my Mizuho 20M QRP antenna, my ATX Walk-about tapped QRP HF portable antenna and repeat the Outbacker test. Not a 100% scientific for numerous reasons, but it will be an interesting relative experiment.

The software to set the unit up is easy to download and is free. Once you configure the Desktop transmitter with your call, a few WSPR specific settings, select the band or bands you want to transmit on, you no longer need the computer connected. The transmitter will start up immediately after powering up the unit and work all by itself. I used as rechargeable 5 Volt cell phone battery pack, that can also be charged by its own built in solar panel.

WSPR has long been used for antenna testing. My thought was "big deal". But I felt jazzed when I started looking at my automatic signal reports from over 3000 miles away with my 200 mW power level.

WSPR Used for Antenna Comparison:

This morning I conducted my antenna comparison using the WSPR transmitter. The first antenna mounted to my mobile SO-239 antenna mount was my Mizuho AN-14 QRP antenna. The stats were interesting. After 20 minutes of operation maximum range was report to 764 miles. Changing to the Walk-About antenna tapped for 20M, the stats showed the range had increased to 1104 miles. Lastly, connecting my mobile 8-foot Outbacker antenna, maximum range increased to 2027 miles. WSPR's minimum discernible signal level is -34 dB below the noise floor. The average signal to noise ratio using the Outbacker antenna was reported at receiving stations at -17.6 dB. Using the Mizuho antenna, the average SNR was at -28 dB below the noise floor. HF band conditions were reported at: Daytime 20 meters: Poor, sunspot number: 137, Solar Flux: 179, Geomagnetic Storm Activity: Quiet, A index: 18, Kp index: 1. As Einstein once said, "Everything is relative."

Since the WSPR Desktop transmitter, via its software, can be configured to change bands automatically, when connected to a multiband antenna an operator could determine which bands maybe be the best BEFORE a contest event.

There are many videos online at www.youtube.com regarding the ZachTek WSPR Desktop Transmitter. Give a look; WSPR is just another tool in the ham radio operators' tool bag. Time to go play!

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Trapped by Snow, Residents Ask Why Help Arrived so Late

March 09, 2023 • Summer Lin, Nathan Solis, Luke Money and Grace Toohey, Los Angeles

(TNS) - Officials knew the San Bernardino County mountains were going to be hit by a bad storm days before an unprecedented blizzard rolled in. But they found themselves unprepared for the historic amount of snow and the disruptions it would bring. More than 100 inches of snow fell in back-to-back storms over the course of a few days, shutting down most mountain roads and leaving multiple communities stranded, some for nearly two weeks since. Some of the snowplows local officials had available proved no match for the massive accumulation of snow. And because much of California was also experiencing record-setting wintry weather, supplemental supplies from other counties were unavailable, officials said.

The series of storms and the damage they inflicted on the mountain communities proved to be a harsh lesson for local officials who were tested like never before by the extraordinary challenges. "The unique and challenging part of this storm was that it hit so many parts of our state simultaneously, so you're unable to move equipment from other parts of the state that are trying to keep their lifeline roads open,"

said Brian Ferguson, a spokesman for the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. He called the storms that hit San Bernardino's highest elevations unprecedented and particularly challenging to respond to. "It really is a street fight — street by street, neighborhood by neighborhood," Ferguson said.

It was not until early this week that many roads were finally cleared and residents — some running low on food and medication — could get out. Others still remain stranded and frustrated by the delays in getting their roads cleared. "It's a shameful situation because if you watch the local news, you're gonna see reports saying the county has boots on the ground and that they're handling everything," said Megan Vasquez, who lives in Crestline. "My street wasn't plowed until this morning." She and others in surrounding communities question why officials were not better prepared. She said a private resident — not the county — plowed her neighborhood's street Tuesday morning. "It definitely felt like we were being forgotten," said Vasquez, who helped start a food distribution center for her neighborhood after many couldn't reach the county's. "It's been a very disheartening time to see the lack of ... officials actually coming in and trying to do something for this area."

Some officials have already acknowledged the need to learn from the storm. "Hindsight is always 2020," San Bernardino County Chief Executive Leonard Hernandez said during a recent video briefing. "Even though I believe the team did an amazing job of mobilizing before, if the National Weather Service ever issues a blizzard warning again, we will take a different approach immediately." But the storms' strength was also new for the county: Ahead of the initial system's arrival, the weather service office in San Diego issued its first-ever blizzard warning for the region. "We've never had one before," Hernandez said Thursday during a livestream on county Supervisor Dawn Rowe's Facebook page. "We have a pretty set playbook of the different types of disasters in the county, unfortunately, since we're so large. We have the wildland fires, we have earthquakes, we have floods, we have acts of terror. Well, now we get to add blizzard into our playbook."

So much snow fell so quickly it rendered ineffective the front-end plows typically used for routine road maintenance, officials previously said. And there wasn't enough time to request extra equipment from other jurisdictions, though it probably wouldn't have been available as Northern California was also contending with heavy snow, they added. "The warning that we had for the blizzard wasn't weeks," San Bernardino County Fire Chief Dan Munsey said during a recent news conference. "We only knew 24 to 36 hours there was a strong potential this was going to occur." San Bernardino County "planned days in advance, mobilized our complete workforce, brought in all the contractors that we had available" in anticipation of the wintry weather, Hernandez said. But in terms of snowfall, "it was beyond the worst-case scenario. You have our commitment as an organization that there are a lot of lessons that we're going to learn from this," he said.

Adam Roser, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service in the San Diego office, said there was "proper warning" even before a blizzard warning was issued. Daily weather briefings were sent to different partners, including county emergency management, city emergency managers and fire departments, Roser said. There was also a winter storm warning issued before the blizzard warning had gone out.

In the seven days leading up to March 2, more than 150 inches of snow fell near Running Springs, while areas east of Big Bear Lake got 134 inches and 115 inches fell northeast of Mt. Baldy, according to the National Weather Service's San Diego office. Lake Arrowhead got about 110 inches and Crestline about 100, while the city of Big Bear Lake saw about 85 inches. Forest Falls and Wrightwood received about 70 and 60 inches, respectively.

The California Department of Transportation began preparing last week by placing de-icing agents on state highways, inspecting snow vehicles and clearing storm drains, according to Caltrans spokesman Eric Dionne. "With all of that said, as an organization, we will do assessments and see where we could

have improved,” he said. More Caltrans crews were also brought into mountain regions before the storm began, he added. “We advised the traveling public that travel was highly discouraged, yet many still came up,” Dionne said. “There were a lot of abandoned cars on our infrastructure that really slowed production and snow removal efforts.” While the state bears responsibility for clearing major highways, other roads are the purview of the county. There are also privately owned roads that residents are typically responsible for clearing themselves.

As of Tuesday, San Bernardino County officials said 91% of county roads have been plowed, though San Bernardino County Fire Battalion Chief Mike McClintock said that includes roads that might still only fit single-lane traffic, and still need to be widened. That’s not to mention the challenge of where to put plowed snow — which officials said has become an ongoing problem. “The sheer amount of snow that has dropped in our roadways, where do you put it?” McClintock said. “Everywhere has 10 feet of snow ... there’s not a lot of places to put the snow.” Big Bear Lake, the only incorporated city among San Bernardino’s highest peaks, has fared relatively better in the storms’ aftermath, which some officials attributed to two factors: It got less snow than western neighbors such as Crestline and Lake Arrowhead, and it had more resources ready to respond quickly. “Not to take anything away from our fellow partners and county agencies, but they have a much larger area to accommodate,” said Mayor Randall Putz. “We have that advantage.”

He said the city has full control over its six square miles, which includes budgeting, resources and staffing — whereas harder-hit areas like Lake Arrowhead or Running Springs are all serviced by the county. With its own public works team, contractors, leased equipment and around-the-clock response, Big Bear Lake had more of its roads cleared faster, though it’s still a work in progress, officials said. As of Monday, most were passable, though not to their full width, and many driveways remained blocked by berms. “This is basically what we think about every winter, it’s not a surprise for us,” said Rick Herrick, a Big Bear Lake council member. “We want to get the roads open, then our visitors can come up, then the businesses will flourish.” In the meantime, communities up and down California are still reeling from a winter that’s brought not just blanketing snow, but record-shattering rainfall and disastrous flooding. “What we are seeing here, again, is just another example of the challenges we face as a state due to a changing climate: Weather whiplash of extreme heat followed by torrential rains followed by snow followed by drought,” Ferguson said. “So we continue to evolve as a state to meet this need, but disasters continue to be more frequent and more severe.” Although progress has been made in recent days, the work is far from over.

Rachelle Angere, of Crestline, spent the last six days without electricity. She and her Jack Russell terrier, Bully, were snowed-in at a friend’s house. They burned lots of paper and wood. “When we ran out of wood, I was digging in the snow for more wood to burn,” Angere said Tuesday while picking up food at a county-operated food distribution site at the Crestline Library. Her electricity came back Monday night, and the roads around her neighborhood were cleared in the early morning. But the roads that lead to her home remained blocked, and she blames the county for not acting sooner to clear them. “If they would have plowed from the beginning, every few hours, it wouldn’t be as dramatic as it is now,” Angere said. “I was on the road and it was just ridiculous.” She can walk around the main drag in Crestline but is worried that if she leaves to go down the mountain for supplies, she might not be able to return. “I feel trapped here,” she said as she shouldered a loaf of bread and several boxes of food.

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News Release from Radio Relay International

Hello Everyone:

As many of you know, beginning in 2016, Radio Relay International embarked on a study of methods used to convey and harmonize message transmission procedures in the emergency management and

EmComm environment. In response to our requests, ARES, RACES, and ACS organizations throughout the United States submitted examples of their methods and forms. These submissions were reviewed and best practices were identified. The RRI Emergency Communications Committee then developed a specialized methodology and forms designed to facilitate the transmission of radiogram-ICS213 messages. These methods are designed to:

1. Remain compatible with standard usages and procedures already in place on traffic networks, thereby minimizing the need for additional training, while preventing possible accuracy errors when inexperienced operators encounter unfamiliar message content.
2. Ensure message content as delivered meets the minimum requirements under the NIMS process, with content presented in a sequence and general format familiar to those active in emergency management.
3. Specialized software-based templates were developed in cooperation with the Winlink Development Team, which walk inexperienced communicators through the process of composing a properly serviced radiogram-ICS213 message.

The RRI methodology has since been tested and proved successful in a variety of disaster exercises with various organizations. A number of Auxcom and ARES organizations use the RRI methods and templates regularly to train their volunteers.

For those unfamiliar with the RRI methodology and the Radiogram-ICS213, here are some helpful links:

Instructions for Radiogram-ICS213 Relay and Delivery:

<https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/a7c9f25d-31a7-4462-ba9c-709656c16385/downloads/Instructions-for-Radiogram-ICS213-Relay-and-De.pdf?ver=1677038165651>

Radiogram-ICS213 Form 1703 (without lines)

<https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/a7c9f25d-31a7-4462-ba9c-709656c16385/downloads/RRI-Form-1703-ICS.pdf?ver=1677038165522>

Radiogram-ICS213 Form 1704 (with lines)

<https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/a7c9f25d-31a7-4462-ba9c-709656c16385/downloads/RRI-Form-1704-ICS.pdf?ver=1677038165522>

Training Video: Recommendations for the Origination, Relay and Delivery of Radiogram-ICS213 Messages:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzmYc2i4YTQ>

One can also find a variety of related information, documents, and training videos on the RRI publications page at:

<https://radiorelay.org/publications>

Lastly, one of the primary goals of RRI is to ensure interoperability. Message traffic must be able to move seamlessly between various modes and networks. In a disaster situation, a message may move between not just Amateur Radio Service networks, but messages may also be transferred to an emergency services dispatch channel or talk group to achieve the last mile delivery to an addressee. Radio amateurs are cautioned to avoid using untested procedures developed in a vacuum or procedures that are developed based on limited information, assumptions, or political agenda. Instead, RRI offers a proven, regularly tested methodology that is compatible with the standard radiogram.

73,
Radio Relay International
www.radiorelay.org

Joke of the Month

Remodeling

A lady was complaining to her husband about remodeling her kitchen. "You have been telling me you were going to get me new cabinets for ten years!" said the wife.

"They are a luxury and the ones we have are fine." the husband replied.

The next day the wife goes to visit her mother for two weeks. When she returns she is overjoyed to see a brand new kitchen waiting for her. She was so thrilled that every night when the husband got home she would have his favorite meal on the table and after dinner she would rub his feet as he read the paper in the recliner.

A couple of weeks later a neighbor came by for a visit. After admiring the new cabinets she says, "All of us were so glad that the fire your husband had while you were gone was confined to the Kitchen."

Quote of the Month

"Fell in love with a beautiful blonde once. Drove me to drink. And I never had the decency to thank her."

W. C. Fields