

SHORT CIRCUITS

Newsletter of the Kent County Amateur Radio Club

May 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

Happenings

May 9	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
May 11	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
May 14	Mother's Day, Don't forget guys!
May 19 – 21	Dayton Hamvention, see below in Hamfests
May 29	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
June 3	Swap Meet, at K3TKJ QTH, Laurel
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 9	Swap Meet, at K3TKJ QTH, Laurel
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 4	Swap Meet, at K3TKJ QTH, Laurel
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

- 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 3 **Delmarva Swap Meet**
Delmarva Amateur Radio Club
Al Waller's QTH, 34087 Old Hickory Rd, Laurel, DE 19956
Contact: Jim Jester, KCITR, 443-366-5677
or Arthur Parks, N3EAK, amparks6@gmail.com **Talk-In:** 146.82 (-) 156.7 PL
- 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
- September 9 **Delmarva Swapmeet**
Delmarva Amateur Radio Club
Al Waller's QTH, 34087 Old Hickory Rd, Laurel, DE 19956
Contact: Jim Jester, KCITR, 443-366-5677
or Arthur Parks, N3EAK, amparks6@gmail.com **Talk-In:** 146.82 (-) 156.7 PL
- November 4 **Delmarva Swap Meet**
Delmarva Amateur Radio Club
Al Waller's QTH, 34087 Old Hickory Rd, Laurel, DE 19956
Contact: Jim Jester, KCITR, 443-366-5677
or Arthur Parks, N3EAK, amparks6@gmail.com **Talk-In:** 146.82 (-) 156.7 PL

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, as many are and have been.

Editor's Comments

One of the things I noticed when going through stories for this month's newsletter was the first in the Tid-Bit section, that a Federal Representative of Congress would take time to visit a hamfest and actually talk to amateur radio operators to discover what the hobby is all about. Don't see any of our federal elected persons showing up for the Georgetown Hamfest, do we? But is that very surprising? Except for Sussex County, there is not much emergency management interest in amateur radio. But now is that the fault of Delaware officials, or of the local hams?

When I was EC in Kent County, there were only four people I could really count on that would deploy when activated, or needed by the Emergency Manager. Four for not knowing how long the County would need auxiliary communications. When hams do public service events and participate in drills and exercises, it gives these elected individuals a chance to notice us, and take stock in what hams have to offer. But when hams are not seen or draw good notice to themselves, elected officials will not come out to our events and see what hams can do for the public, that is if there are hams that will actually get on the radio and operate.

Field Day is coming up, and now we have a chance to get an elected official out for an hour or so and see what amateur radio is, and also see that hams can actually operate a radio and pass information. Making sure that those people know when and where they can witness the marvel of ham radio, is one of the things that must be done well before the dates in question, before these people that house themselves in Wilmington say that they already have other plans!

President's Column

All,

I would like to invite you to our field day activities June 24th and 25th 2023. For you newbies this is the time to learn how to set up a remote station. From antenna construction to troubleshooting a station, including high VSWR to generator power output.

The purpose of field day is to make as many contacts on as many bands the rules allow. These are worth points to establish ranking among stations of like configuration.

So, folks please set aside this weekend and join us. We will need setup/teardown, operators and a couple good cooks. It won't be held against you if you can fill more than one position.

73,Paul / N3BUH

Vice-President's Column

As many of you know, I maintain a digital HF hub for 3rd Region traffic. The hub uses an IC-718 which is controlled by BPQ32 software on Windows using both Pactor and VARA modems. The transceiver automatically steps through preset frequencies, changing about every five seconds, listening for stations attempting to connect to exchange traffic. Of course the radio stops scanning if it receives a call. The radio has its own dedicated end fed half-wave antenna and is set up in my basement, apart from my shack. I check the message listing daily and I can hear a soft klunk as the radio changes bands. The computer is hooked to a UPS to prevent momentary power outages from shutting down the system.

The other day I checked and the transceiver was stuck on one of the 80 meter frequencies. I tried restarting the BPQ32 software. No change. I tried restarting the computer since restarting is Microsoft's answer to any problem. No change. I could manually change bands and frequencies so the radio seemed to be OK. I checked all of the cable connections and all were secure. What was left? The CIV

control cable. Thankfully I had another one hooked up to my IC-7300 and swapped it out. Problem solved once I renamed the new com port created by plugging in another cable to what com port had been used by the old cable. I tried the old cable on my IC-7300 and it did not work. Apparently a power surge fried the cable. I ordered another one to have on hand – just in case.

It's satisfying when you can figure out a solution to a problem – Isn't that part of the fun of ham radio?

73
Jim KC3BTV
VP KCARC

From the Section Manager's Shack

Section Managers Column May 2023

First of all my sincere thanks to all who worked to set up, and those who supported that effort by attending the Georgetown HamFest and Section Convention last month. From what I saw, a lot of people had a good time.

We were very happy to have our new Division Director, Bob Famiglio, K3RF, for the two forums. His candid discussion seemed to be well received. The ARRL is the advocate nationally and internationally for Amateur Radio, and we all need to support that effort.

The next day, a large group was out to support the Coastal Delaware Running Fest (CODEL) in Rehoboth and Lewes. Good weather, 3,000 runners, and no really major issues, made for a good day. Again my thanks to all who made the commitment to be out there in public, showcasing what Hams can do. We need to be doing more of these kinds of activities, and generating positive publicity for our hobby.

The Tornado that crossed Sussex brought out a number of operators with an informal Skywarn net. So with some renewed interest in Skywarn, there is a real need and threat, contact Steven Keller, KC3DSO (kc3dso@gmail.com) the coordinator for Kent and Sussex Counties. He will have information on where and how to get Skywarn training and a Spotter Number.

Rumor has it that "Billy Bob" will be returning to the mid-peninsula in the near future. Watch for announcements of when he might be back. Don't know that he will have as many surprises, but you never know. There's a bunch of back roads in northwest Sussex and western Kent counties that might fuel his imagination.

Last but not least, it is high time to get your Field day plans in order, and make a commitment to 'take it to the field', the last full weekend of June. This is a golden opportunity to showcase amateur radio to the public. By the way, it's fun, and you just might learn something as you get some practice in setting a station where there ain't one.

Later, 73
John, K3PFW

The Emcomm Corner

On April 1 an F-3 tornado cut a 15 mile swath through Sussex County. Since the tornado hit many volunteers from both inside and outside the affected area have helped in the cleanup effort. This past weekend I was a part of a multi-state volunteer crew helping with debris cleanup. What is incredible is how a house can lose its roof and 100 yards away stacks of crab baskets are untouched. I saw one spot where there were three homes in a row where the two end houses suffered some damage and the middle house was simply vacuumed off its slab and disappeared. According to some homeowners I spoke with there was a severe thunderstorm watch in effect but no thoughts of a tornado until it was on the ground.

This all happened just a few miles from Kent County and it could have been us instead of them. This should remind us that weather conditions can change incredibly fast and we should be prepared. We are in a unique position to report events in real time via radio. When a severe thunderstorm watch is issued for our area, get on the 97 repeater and listen. When a warning is issued, join the Skywarn net or if no net is established, start one to accept reports. If you haven't taken Skywarn training, do it, not just to be a spotter but for your own safety.

Skywarn is not the only reporting avenue. Last EMCOMM meeting we talked about "Eyewarn" reporting for non-weather related events like widespread power outages. Again, we have the technology to assist in evaluating the extent and severity of events. Turn on that radio and use it.

73,
Jim KC3BTV
Kent County EC

AUXCOMM News

"It's Not Just a Good Idea. It's the Law!"

Anyone remember that slogan? Sure, you do! At least you should if you were driving back in the 1970's. That is the line from the federal government campaign that tried to sell the public on the mandatory 55 mph national speed limit. The old "Double-Nickel". It was the law of the land from 1974 – 1995 in response to the oil crisis of 1973. It was intended to improve vehicular fuel economy with the goal of reducing our dependence on oil imports. Reports vary widely regarding its effectiveness and compliance level. It did, however, spawn the Sammy Hagggar song "I Can't Drive 55", several films including "Smokey and the Bandit", "The Cannonball Run", and "Convoy", and the CB craze of the '70's. Ahhh, the good old days!

This first week of May 2023 holds some significant dates. There is, of course, Cinco de Mayo, literally the 5th of May. This annual special day is one where everyone wants to catch Corona (the good kind!) or your favorite brand and commemorate Mexico's victory over France in the 1862 Battle of Puebla (thanks, Wikipedia). The day before that (May 4) offers the once-a-year opportunity to tell all your Star Wars buddies "May the Fourth Be With You". But the date that is most relevant to us in the Amateur world this year is May 3rd. Why's that?

May 3, 2023 is the deadline by which all amateur stations must verify and ensure compliance under the new Maximum Permissible Exposure (MPE) rules that went into effect on May 3, 2021. During this two-year period the updated rules were directed towards new or modified stations. Existing stations were given time to become compliant. Time's up. In reality, the standards haven't changed. Prior categorical exclusions have been removed and, as of this new date, all stations will need to be specifically compliant. If you haven't already done so, it's time to get working on this. It's really not hard, and there

has been much written about it including great information and tools on the ARRL website and the latest (May 2023) issue of QST (page 64).

So, not looking to recreate, here, information that can readily be obtained elsewhere. In summary, it all comes down to these factors:

- ▣ Frequency – Some frequencies penetrate the body more than others
- ▣ RF Power Level (ERP): Output power – line loss + antenna gain = Effective Radiated Power
- ▣ Mode – The modulation mode affects average power level (FM carrier power level is 100%, SSB is not)
- ▣ Distance – The further the distance from the transmitting antenna, the lower the RF radiation level
- ▣ Duty Cycle – How much time is the transmitter actually keyed within a given period of time
- ▣ Time of Exposure – How much time an individual spends within the RF field
- ▣ Controlled vs Uncontrolled – Different requirements so know the difference between them

While there are formulas and tables that deal with all of these factors in the original FCC OET65 document, its “B” supplement, and the free ARRL “RF Exposure and You” down-loadable (all of which do make for informative reading), several on-line tools have been created to make the calculations a very easy process including this one from ARRL <http://arrrl.org/rf-exposure-calculator> and this one from Hintlink Technology http://hintlink.com/power_density.htm

My advice is to use one or more of these free calculators to document the MPE characteristics of your station. It is not necessary to report the results to the FCC or anyone else. Just plug in the numbers for each band that you operate on, print the results, and throw them into a file with your station records. That, in my opinion, will satisfy the requirements of this regulation and put you in a defensible position if ever challenged (here's looking at you, HOA folks). If the calculations result in an area of concern, then take the necessary steps to bring your station into compliance, perhaps by reducing output power or increasing the distance from the antenna to areas of possible exposure. Remember to update the calculations if you make a change to your station configuration. Make sure to check field day and other new setups!

Remember, “It’s Not Just a Good Idea... It’s the Law!” 73’s Bill, N3ID

Club Happenings

Members Participate in CODEL

On April 16 the Coastal Running Festival happened in Sussex County. For those who are not aware of the event, it is a multiple race event all happening at the same time, a marathon, half-marathon, and 9K, all on the parts of the same course. The marathon is 26.2 miles, as all marathons are, and it was covered by 22 amateurs from various clubs throughout Delaware.

From KCARC members participating were KB3PRW, KC3BTV, N3BUH, K3PFW, K3LT, AJ3L, and N3KRX. When you see one of these members, thank them for keeping your amateur radio privileges alive by taking part in public service events.

In Memorial

We lost Karen Sanders, long time partner of Jay, K3CHI, after a courageous battle with cancer on April 17. Karen and Jay lived in Marydel.

Member Upgrade

The next time you're on the air, congratulate Jay, K3CHI, on his upgrade to General. Jay took and passed the exam at the Delmarva Hamfest on April 15. Now we just need to get Jay on HF!

Also, a new member, Daniel, KC3VYO, passed his Tech exam just before the April meeting. So when you hear Daniel, give him a shout.

A note of interest, another new member, Hunter, KC3VTB, made his first DX contact with RW1F in Russia on 20 meters, using the club call, with N3KRX as control operator. Congratulate Hunter when you hear him.

KCARC 2023 Field Day Update

1. Doug KB3PRW, our Club Trustee, has secured Special Event Callsign N3Y for our use during Field Day.
2. Location will be Brecknock Park as usual.
3. We have requested and should be OK to place the club trailer on the North side of the tree line -- on the opposite side of the Pavillion/Parking area from where we have operated in the past.
4. We are requesting the presence of various State, city, and county officials and media coverage of the event.
5. We need a firm commitment from club members for the following:
 - Setup/breakdown
 - Operators! I want to operate category 3A and run separate CW, Phone, and digital stations plus a GOTA station.
 - A food committee
 - An antenna committee: We need to plan for antennas for all three HF stations and the GOTA station. I already have two antennas to devote to the event -- plus a high-quality coax-fed center insulator and end insulators that I'd like to use to build an 80-meter dipole. I also have enough stuff to make a 20-meter dipole. In other words -- we need to have a pre-Field Day antenna party -- and I'd like to get our younger new hams involved in this for some hands-on experience!

A roster for all to sign up for these positions will be available at the May 9, 2023 regular Club meeting. Any questions can be directed to me either on the 146.97 repeater, by phone at (302) 270-1548, or email to yodoc@aol.com.

73 de Larry, K3LT
KCARC 2023 Field Day Chairman

Annual Armed Forces Day Crossband Test

The US Department of Defense (DoD) will host this year's Armed Forces Day (AFD) Crossband Test on May 13, 2023. This annual event is open to all licensed amateur radio operators and will not impact any public or private communications. For more than 50 years, military and amateur stations have taken part in this event.

The AFD Crossband Test is a unique opportunity to test two-way communications between military communicators and radio stations in the Amateur Radio Service (ARS), as authorized in 47 CFR 97.111. These tests provide opportunities and challenges for radio operators to demonstrate individual technical skills in a tightly controlled exercise scenario.

Military stations will transmit on selected frequencies and will announce the specific ARS frequencies monitored. All of the times are Zulu (Z), and all frequencies are Upper Side Band (USB) unless otherwise noted. The frequencies used for the test will not stray outside the confines of the exercise.

A complete list of frequencies, time periods, QSL cards, and other information can be found at DoD MARS - Armed Forces Day.

AFD is a time of honor. It will be celebrated on Saturday, May 20, 2023. The first AFD was celebrated with parades, open houses, receptions, and air shows. Today, many events and activities take place and may include multi-service military displays in areas open to the public, various educational activities that teach children about the armed forces, and large parades with local celebrations.

The longest running AFD parade in the United States is held in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Certain types of music will be played at AFD 2023 events to show respect to those in the armed forces who died for their country.

Thanks to the ARRL Letter

Interesting Facts of the Month

You are 50 times more likely to be killed by bees than win the lottery (Even less likely to ever work a P5 station!)

Astronaut Scott Kelly grew 2 inches after being in space for a year. (Want to get taller, go to space!!)

Tidbit of Information of the Month Department

Congresswoman at Hamfest

Congresswoman Debbie Lesko, representative of Arizona's 8th congressional district (AZ-08), attended the DeVry Hamfest in Phoenix, Arizona, on Saturday, April 8, 2023. She had the chance to visit with radio amateurs and explore information about programs such as ARRL's Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES).

Lesko tweeted about her experience at the event, stating, "It was wonderful to join [ARRL's] Hamfest and meet with amateur radio operators in Arizona! I'm proud to support amateur radio operators, who play a critical role in emergency situations and have provided invaluable contributions to our nation!" Lesko spent several hours at the event. Amateur radio plays a critical role in emergency preparedness plans in Arizona.

Thanks to ARRL Letter

Time to Get Ready for Field Day

ARRL Field Day is just over two months away, but like spring cleaning, it pays to start getting ready now. 2023 Field Day will be held June 24 - 25. It is ham radio's open house. Every June, hams throughout North America set up temporary transmitting stations in public places to demonstrate ham radio's science, skill and service to communities and the nation. It combines public service, emergency preparedness, community outreach, and technical skills all in a single event. Some participants may also choose to operate from home, using the exercise to develop and practice their personal radio communications capability.

Field Day has been an annual event since 1933 and remains the most popular event in ham radio.

In 2022, 4,929 entries were submitted (including check logs), and there was a total of 29,679 reported participants. Field Day is open to all amateurs in the areas covered by the ARRL/RAC Field Organizations and countries within IARU Region 2. DX stations residing in other regions may be contacted for credit and may submit entries as check logs.

The main focus of Field Day is to work as many stations as possible on the 160-, 80-, 40-, 20-, 15-, and 10-meter HF bands, all bands on 50 MHz and above, and to learn to operate in abnormal situations in less-than-optimal conditions. A premium is placed on developing skills to meet the challenges of emergency preparedness and acquaint the general public with the capabilities of amateur radio.

For Field Day 2023, several rule changes have been made. It's a good idea to make sure that your logging software has been updated to the most current version to incorporate these rule changes including the updated Canadian sections list. There are many facets to operating on Field Day and knowing the rules and keeping good logs are paramount to successful contacts.

Many local amateur radio clubs participate in ARRL Field Day. To start preparing for Field Day, check out www.arrl.org/field-day for the official rules and all the information you'll need. To find a participating radio club in your area, use the Field Day Locator on the page.

Thanks to the ARRL Letter

"GEORGE THE FIRST"

May 5, 1941. Georges Bégué (pronounced "Gsheorge Bay-gay") drops blind into an empty field near Chateauroux, France. There is no one on the ground to meet him; he is the first of 470 agents for SOE (Special Operations Executive - ed) to be inserted into France. Within a few days he makes his first contacts and will be on his radio, starting the process of building up resistance networks in France. He has on the British one-piece jump coveralls over his civilian suit, and that odd jump helmet that the Brits used for clandestine drops. His radio was dropped with him, and is lying a short distance away. The Whitley bomber he dropped from fades in the distance. I imagine it is dead quiet, with just his heart pounding in his ears, the engine noise quieting, and the crickets coming back to life around him.

Georges is the guy that came up with the idea for the BBC to broadcast those odd coded personal messages that alerted various listeners to pending operations, canceled operations, babies born and so on. The first well-known message was broadcast by the BBC on June 1, 1944; "Long sobs of Autumn violins." This message let the resistance know that the DDay invasion would start within two weeks. On June 5, 1944 at 23:15, the second message was broadcast; "Wound my heart with monotonous languor." This let the resistance know that the invasion would start within 48 hours, and the resistance should start all their sabotage operations in support of the invasion.

But all that is a long way off, and George just wants to get off this open field and find his local and hopefully safe contact. This blind broadcast system also let French citizens know that the agent they were meeting, and perhaps didn't trust, was truly an allied operator. The French citizen would make up a phrase, and the agent would pass it along to London. When the citizen heard their own phrase repeated on the BBC, that was their way of knowing that the agent they met was the real deal; there was no way for that message to get to the BBC otherwise.

SOE radio operators became informally known as "Georges" after that. A team leader might introduce someone, and say "he is the George for this mission." But Georges Bégué was the first. He emigrated and became a US citizen after the war.

Thanks to March issue of The Rag Chew from SKCC

Note from ed;

The Special Operations Executive was a secret British World War II organization (English spelling). It was officially formed on 22 July 1940 under Minister of Economic Warfare Hugh Dalton, from the amalgamation of three existing secret organizations. Wikipedia

FBI Warns Against Public Phone Charging Stations

Users should exercise caution when using public charging stations at airports, malls and hotels, as the FBI recently warned residents against potential cybersecurity risks.

April 14, 2023 • Yilun Cheng, Houston Chronicle

(TNS) — Houstonians should exercise caution when using public charging stations at airports, malls and hotels, as the FBI recently warned residents against potential cyber risks.

Criminals have found ways to compromise public USB charging ports, allowing them to infect devices with malware and gain unauthorized access to users' phones, tablets and computers, according to a recent Tweet from the FBI.

CYBERSECURITY: Gov. Abbott's vision for San Antonio: 'Cybersecurity Capital of Texas'

"Avoid using free charging stations in airports, hotels or shopping centers," according to a Twitter post from the FBI's Denver field office. "Bad actors have figured out ways to use public USB ports to introduce malware and monitoring software onto devices. Carry your own charger and USB cord and use an electrical outlet instead."

This warning brings attention to the risk of "juice jacking," a tactic hackers use to trick people into downloading malicious mobile apps. It typically takes place in public areas where mobile devices are charged via USB cables. The aim is to infect victims' devices with malware or to steal sensitive data, such as credit card numbers.

It wasn't immediately clear whether scammers also have been targeting paid charging stations, such as those found in busy gaming and family fun center chains.

The recent number of reports showed an increasing trend in cyber-theft cases. Last year, Americans lost \$10.3 billion to online scams, the FBI reported. The bureau's website offers additional tips for protecting oneself from such cyberattacks.

The Houston Airport System did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the security of its many public charging stations.

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Thanks to Government Technology online

A Brief History of Amateur Radio EmComm Organization

In the early days, amateur radio and hams were considered irritations and nuisances to the "real" communicators -- the commercial sector and the military. We were almost outlawed, and ultimately relegated to the "useless" frequencies of "200 meters and down." That was until it was demonstrated that we could actually be of use as a service. In 1913, college students/hams in Michigan and Ohio passed disaster messages when other means of communications were down in the aftermath of severe storms and flooding in that part of the country. A Department of Commerce bulletin followed, proposing a dedicated communications network of radio amateurs to serve during disasters. Five special licenses were reportedly issued. A magazine article noted that amateurs were now considered to be essential auxiliary assets of the national public welfare.

ARRL was formed in 1914, and disaster response communications as provided by radio amateurs became organized and useful. In 1920, amateur radio was used to help recover a stolen car, of all things! Soon, the use of amateur radio for natural disasters that we traditionally think of now emerged with hams active in responding to deadly flooding in New Mexico and an ice storm in Minnesota.

More organization followed, with a memorandum of understanding emerging with the American railroad system for amateur radio support when the railroad's wire lines were down: There was an ARRL Railroad Emergency Service Committee. There was even a Q-signal designated: QRR, a kind of land SOS. More reports of disaster response communications provided by amateurs appeared in QST, much as they do there and here in this newsletter today. A major New England flood had amateurs supplying the only efficient means of communications from the devastated areas to the outside world, prompting the chairman of the Federal Radio Commission to say the future of radio depended on the amateurs.

Hams worked with the Burgess Battery Company for emergency radio power. Many of us old-timers, including myself, used those batteries when we were kids for our electrical experiments and kits. They looked like tall, thick candle columns! We learned our electrical principles from them. More organization followed, and traffic handling was recommended as the best way to gain discipline and proficiency to prepare for the efficiency and effectiveness needed in response communications situations.

ARRL Field Day was started to prepare amateurs for portable operation, as was necessary in disaster situations when commercial power and means of communications were down. In 1935, the ARRL Emergency Corps was formed with the goal of having an Amateur Radio Emergency Station in every community -- a goal that remains just as urgent today as it did then! To wit, just look at today's emphasis on the neighborhood and community as "first responder" and on self-reliance in the post-disaster survival chain. More "served agencies" emerged as potential partners, including the Red Cross. In 1936, major flooding across a 14-state region served as the ARRL Emergency Corps' first major testing, serving well, and solidifying amateur radio's status as a critical disaster response communications asset and public service. Communications operating protocols and the appointment of Emergency Coordinators followed.

Technical advances supported this evolution. Spark-gap transmitters gave way to the vacuum tube, making portable operations more viable. Articles on portable transmitters and receivers appeared in QST. Exploration and experimentation in the VHF region also spurred more development of portable equipment. The development of the variable frequency oscillator, or VFO -- something that modern generations of hams take for granted -- was at the time a liberating breakthrough offering more versatility and flexibility, and of course more efficiency in meeting the demands of a disaster response communications situation.

World War II meant a shutdown of amateur radio, but many hams joined the War Emergency Radio Service, which did provide some communications during the war period for natural disasters. After the war, ARRL reconstituted its disaster response communications programs and networks, and the first Simulated Emergency Test was run in 1946. The Cold War followed, and the government formed the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) for civil defense (CD) purposes. It served as the forerunner of the modern emergency management model that we know so well today.

Throughout the 1960s and later up to today, the role, procedures, protocols, equipment, and techniques of amateur radio in public service, disaster, and emergency communications continue to evolve, ebb and flow. This evolution is fueled by advances in Amateur Radio technology and its application, lessons learned from each and every incident that involves amateur communications support.

Rick Palm, K1CE, based on an excellent article titled "QRR: The Beginnings of Amateur Radio Emergency Communications" by Gil McElroy, VE3PKD, that appeared in the September 2007 issue of QST

Thanks to the ARES Letter

County Providing Emergency Radios to Its Residents

The radios, which are intended to replace the black Weather Advisory Alert Radios, will be used to broadcast emergencies for severe weather throughout the county or chemical incidents at the Blue Grass Army Depot.

(TNS) - Madison Countians should be on the lookout for a special package to arrive at their doorstep soon, as Madison County EMA/CSEPP is providing new and improved emergency radios to every Madison County residence. They will begin rolling the new radios out to locals' mailboxes on Feb. 27, and Deputy Judge Executive Jill Williams estimated that every radio will be delivered by the end of March. The radios, which are intended to replace the black Weather Advisory Alert Radios, will be used to broadcast emergencies for severe weather throughout the county or chemical incidents at the Blue Grass Army Depot. "They will come out in waves. Everyone's radio won't ship out at the same time. Give it a couple of weeks and if you don't receive one, give the Emergency Management Agency or the Emergency Operations Center a call. They will come out in waves by zone," Williams said.

The radios are specifically programmed by address and zone, meaning they will only work within the address they were originally delivered to Williams said that anyone moving to a new residence should leave the AlertFM at that address. Following delivery, there will be a 45-day period ending in mid-April to dispose of any remaining previous radios. There will be dumpsters to drop the old radios off at the following locations.

Madison County Emergency Operations Center, 560 South Keeneland Drive, Richmond.

Madison County Road Department North, 325 North Madison Avenue, Richmond.

Madison County Road Department South, 208 Clarksville Lane, Richmond.

Berea Utilities, 200 Harrison Road, Berea.

Funding for the new radios comes directly from the CSEPP program at no cost to county taxpayers. The new AlertFM radios are smaller than its predecessor, and according to Williams, are also simpler to use. Williams explained that the plan is for the AlertFM radios to be used long after CSEPP and the demilitarization campaign at the Blue Grass Army Depot depart the county. "These alert radios are just another part of the notification system that is federally-funded through the CSEPP program that we're able to share with residents because of the CSEPP program. It's a benefit that most counties and communities across the state or even the country don't get," Williams said. "I think it's been around 10 years since we last replaced our radios, so it was time for an upgrade...The life cycle for these devices at home can be used long after the chemical weapons are gone."

According to an estimate from the most recent meeting of the Citizens' Advisory Commission (CAC) and the Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board (CDCAB) meeting in Dec. 2022, the chemical weapon demilitarization campaign at the Bluegrass Chemical Agent Pilot Plant (BGCAPP) will end on Sept. 20, 2023. As of Dec. 9, 2022, 325.7 tons—62.3%— of the chemical weapons at Blue Grass Army Depot have been destroyed. The plant is currently deactivating the stockpile of GB M55 rockets, which members of the CAC and CDCAB boards warned was the longest and most dangerous campaign left to be completed. "There's only one (munition) left, and what's left is the GB M55 rockets. Those are the biggies. That's half our stockpile. and those are the ones that are going to be problems," CAC Chair Doug Hindman said during a June 2022 meeting.

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Laser-Powered Lightning Rod Intercepts Strikes 600 Feet Away LIGHTNING IN A BOTTLE

A group of European researchers has developed a method of vastly improving the old-fashioned lightning rod. The system fires 1,000 terawatt-level laser pulses per second into storm clouds, intercepting lightning as it forms and directing it toward a 26-foot rod. This laser-driven method can cover areas of up to 590 feet in any direction, making it much more effective than traditional lightning rods, which are limited by their height to catching lightning in much smaller areas.

Source: Popular Science

21%

A report published in January found that the Department of the Interior needs better password management. Auditors were able to crack 21 percent of DOI's 85,944 passwords. Of those, 288 belonged to department employees with high user privilege, and 362 belonged to senior government employees. They also found that 89 percent of DOI's "high-value assets" weren't protected by multifactor authentication.

Source: Gizmodo

Thanks to Government Technology online

A Little Story of CW

Back in 1951, I was 15 years old and voluntarily attending summer school to learn how to touch-type, a skill that has been very useful over the decades. When I read in QST that the Novice test was to be given in Nashville, Tennessee, for the first time, I decided to take that test.

I was doing well in typing and I was also up on the code so I asked my teacher if I could skip school that day. He agreed, so a couple of days later I hopped on a bus for the 45 minute ride to Nashville. I was the youngest applicant in the room. I had no problem with the written and code tests.

In those days, tests were not graded right away so I had to wait a couple of months for the results. After what seemed like forever, I got a letter from the FCC with my license and my callsign, WN4TPN.

In early 1952, I went back to Nashville and took the General test and was able to drop the first "N" from my call. I still hold that call today. When I entered college in 1954, I joined the Navy ROTC and upon graduation entered Navy Pilot Training.

About 14 years after that, I was flying an A-4E Skyhawk off of the USS Hancock on a very dark night. I was flying a tanker mission to refuel other aircraft in the Gulf of Tonkin. When I checked in with the controllers on the ship, they could not hear me but I could hear them. My transmitter was sending out some sort of CW but the shipboard controllers could not hear any voice modulation.

Since my mission was important to the safety of planes returning, I decided to try something. I tried clicking my mic button in Morse Code. One of the officers in the ship's tower was also a ham and realized what I was doing and he quickly replied to me by voice.

Refueling at night is a tricky thing under the best of circumstances but there were absolutely NO LIGHTS in the Gulf of Tonkin in those wartime days. I proceeded to refuel the planes that needed it before landing on the carrier. My knowledge, and that of the ham in the tower, of the Morse code proved to be a very important skill.

- Submitted by: Edward A. O'Neal, USN Retired, W4TPN, to QCWA Newsletter

Joke of the Month

Milk Money

An art connoisseur passed a little grocery store in New York when he noticed a kitten on the front step lapping up some milk in a bowl. The cat was mangy with one ear half chewed off and clumps of fur missing. What really caught the collector's eye was the bowl the kitten was drinking from. It was a rare antique worth thousands.

He walks in the store and offers \$20.00 for the cat. "He's not for sale." Says the store owner.

"That's ridiculous!" Says the collector. "He is one of the ugliest cats I've seen. He must be for sale. I'll give you \$100.00 for him."

The store owner thought for a second and said "It's a deal."

The connoisseur hands the store owner the money, which he quickly pockets, and as he starts out the store asks "For that price I'm sure you won't mind sending that old bowl with him. He seems so happy drinking from it."

The store owner says " No way. That's my lucky bowl. From that bowl I've sold 26 cats this week!"

Quote of the Month

Ideas not coupled with action never become larger than the brain cells they occupy. -
Anonymous