

SHORT CIRCUITS

Newsletter of the Kent County Amateur Radio Club

June 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 Hurricane Season

Happenings

June 1	Hurricane Season Starts in the Atlantic
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 below
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

June 3	Delmarva Swapmeet Delmarva Amateur Radio Club Al Waller's QTH, 34087 Old Hickory Rd, Laurel, DE 19956 Contact: Jim Jester, KCITR, 443-366-5677
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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 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

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 canceled, as many are and have been.

Editor's Comments

I just received the new issue of QST in the mail. I had reviewed it briefly online a couple weeks ago and brought Larry a copy of the bonus sheet in the Field Day Guide that QST has in it every year. There was a page that included the "Seven Tips for Field Day Success". The first was to be safe, which should be a "no brainer" for any event. The second was "have a plan". That would make sense too. The third was to "assign tasks" which any good manager should be aware of. Of course with that is finding people to do the tasks, which can be much, much harder. Fourth is to "schedule operators", again there need to be people willing to sign up. Fifth is "bonus points", which can be had easily, usually. Sixth is to "submit your score". You would be surprised at the number of operations that don't. Lastly is to "utilize the 2023 Field Day packet!"

These are simple ideas to follow to obtain a good score, have fun while doing it, and experience some of the great camaraderie of amateur radio. Usually, if one pays attention, a lot can be learned by participating in Field Day. But all of this was said last year, and there wasn't even enough participation to field a GOTA station. Don't know what a GOTA station is, read the rules online at www.arrl.org.

In the Tid-Bit section you will find a story about a fire aboard a ship off of the coast of Alaska. Remember we have all been told how great new technology is and how it is so fail safe and that the Internet will "never go down".

Also there is a cute little story about a cat on a ship. Now I'm not saying I'm trying to teach my cats Morse, but at the slow rate I copy, maybe they could do better! Besides, my orange Tabby cat is not named Morse, she's Tinkerbell!

As you will see as you look through the newsletter, there is a lot about field Day. Field Day has, and will be in many parts of the nation and Canada, a really big deal. It was designed as a "in the field" contest in 1933 and has kept going since. The main reason that Field Day has lasted so long is because it is fun! It also gives many who do not have their own stations a chance to operate HF, which is fun! What else is ham radio than communicating with other people?

President's Column

Nada!!

Vice-President's Column

Have you ever needed a replacement knob for a piece of equipment but couldn't find one? Have you looked for a decent way to secure the middle of a dipole to the top of a 30 ft fiberglass mast? Have you looked for a guy ring for that 30 ft mast but nothing was suitable? Did you need a dog bone insulator and didn't want to wait to order one? Did you want a stand for a Xiegu G90 but didn't want to spring \$45 to buy one?

Welcome to the possibilities of 3D printing. I recently bought a factory reconditioned 3D printer for less than \$150 and it is amazing what it can do. The 3D printer builds objects by laying down strips of partially melted plastic. Free software is available to make 3D plans but there are literally thousands of free projects online that others have designed and uploaded on websites such as www.thingiverse.com. It does take some care in learning how to set up the printer as setup tolerances are within 0.001 inch for proper operation but there are many YouTube videos to help you learn. Material costs about ten cents per gram. The G-90 stand uses about \$1.80 worth of material. There are a lot of people that use 3D printers to make less practical objects like action figures.

Another fun thing to play with when propagation stinks!

Jim KC3BTV
VP KCARC

From the Section Manager's Shack

Section Managers Column June 2023

This is June, are you ready for Field day? Have you signed up with your local club to support their effort? If not, why not? If you're not doing a "club thing", there is no reason that you can't do a solo effort. Ham radio is about doing. Field day is about doing and demonstrating what we can do.

To try and describe Field Day, is sort of like the story about the five blind men trying to describe an elephant. It's fun, it's a challenge, it's a contest, it's camaraderie, it's comedy, it's serious, it's an exercise, and 'all should be doing' it.

The chant of the Five P's, "Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance" is certainly true when it comes to Field Day. Lists and more lists is the makeup for a good, successful Field day, and it's not too late to start that process, you've got almost a month! If it was a Hurricane coming you'd have about three days. Practice now while you have the time. Yes, it's a contest. How better to test your setup and operating skills. But it is also preparation for that time, "when all else has failed", and now it's Showtime! Time to show what we can do. Time to show that the primary reason we have the privileges that we do from the FCC, was not a mistake. Time to put the skills and equipment we have to work for our neighbors, our communities and our state. Oh and yes, it's certainly time to have fun. If your club is putting on a Field day event, make sure it's listed in the Field day locator on the ARRL website. If you're looking for a Field Site to visit, check the ARRL website Field Day locator, and hope the previous statement has been taken care of, because as of this morning, there were no sites listed for Delaware. If y'all want people to know where you are ya gotta advertise!

My first Field Day, in the early sixties with K3GHS, was immortalized in QST with a cartoon that had our equipment spread all over the side of Kocher Mountain when the hay wagon carting all our stuff overturned. In 1972, I came in from Field Day with the Air Force MARS group from Dover AFB, only to turn right around and head out to the "Wrath of Agnes" in Wyoming Valley, Pennsylvania, to set up operations, at the then Avoca Airport, to coordinate relief supplies. The rest certainly weren't as dramatic, but they all have been memorable. There have been a few years I couldn't get 'out there', but those when I did were great, and I look forward to this year. COVID is over, life is getting back to whatever normal is supposed to be, and Field Day is just around the corner. Take it to the field!

Later, 73, John K3PFW

The Emcomm Corner

There are three good reasons to participate in Field Day the last full weekend of June.

Reason number one is ADAPTATION. Field Day was conceived in 1933 as an opportunity for radio amateurs to practice making contacts under simulated emergency conditions. Using temporary antennas, off-grid power sources, and portable radio setups we have the opportunity to play radio under less than optimum conditions. In a real emergency situation we don't have the luxury of a finely manicured system like some have in their home shack so we learn to adapt. We get good at adapting by practicing doing it.

Reason number two is ACCESSIBILITY. Not every amateur with HF privileges has the ability to have an operating HF system at home for playing radio. It may be HOA restrictions, fiscal restrictions, space limits, or some other reason that prevents HF operations. Field day is an opportunity to operate a rig and make contacts without a substantial investment. Pick a time and make those electrons get excited.

Reason number three is FUN. It's nice to get together and share tips, snacks and chat. We all have different areas and levels of expertise and can learn from each other. You might pick up an idea to use at your home shack or for the next POTA activation. I understand there may be some cakes available to munch on while swapping tales. Some enjoy operating, others setup, and others picnicking - there is a place for everyone.

Hope to see everyone at Brecknock Park for field day.

Jim KC3BTV
Kent County Emergency Coordinator

AUXCOMM News

See the second attachment for a really neat story on Sussex AUXCOMM. I'm sorry your editor is not computer savvy enough to have put it here and I didn't want to ruin the excellent layout of the article.

Club Happenings

A Note(s) About Field Day

If you missed the last meeting, you didn't get an update on what has occurred so far. Apparently we have secured the call sign "N3Y" for Field Day. One of our new members has volunteered to do the food. Larry had a sign up list available, and some people volunteered. Field Day will obviously be somewhat of a topic at the next meeting. Plan on being there and see what you can do to help out,

Since the last meeting, all members should have received the latest reflector post from Larry, reproduced below;

To all KCARC members:

I have been undergoing some physical problems related to a work injury and have been having problems with getting medical appointments etc. Therefore I have decided to step down as Field Day coordinator. We already have Brecknock Park reserved, I have filled out and signed the waivers, and I have an electronic copy of the permit which I will print out and bring to the next meeting on June 13. So that's already taken care of. We still need to get the trailer put in shape for the event, so someone will need to head that up. I have Doug KB3PRW making a set of keys for the trailer which I will make available to whomever takes up this task. I will do what I can to help, but I don't feel up to being in charge. So please, someone pick it up from here!

73 de Larry, K3LT

And since that notice came out, we get;

Ladies and Gents,

Since we have had no other volunteers to coordinate field day. I'm stepping up to the plate to do so.

I'm requesting 3 or 4 people to step up to be station captains. One for Voice, one for CW and one for the Digital and one for the GOTA station. The captains will be responsible for scheduling operators for their stations. (As far as a sign-up list goes, that aspect does not work and has not worked in the past.)

Please I'm humbly asking for participation from all able bodies in the club. If you have supported another club in the past, please come support us at field day this year.

73,
Thanks,
Paul / N3BUH

Amateur Radio Losses K7JA

Charles "Chip" Margelli, K7JA, became a "silent key" on May 25 from cancer. Chip was famous for being the sending operator of the often seen telegraphers vs texters shootout on Jay Leno's Tonight Show in 2005, which the CW ops won! CQ has sent out a notice on Chip's passing with this from Gordon West, WB6NOA:

"Chip left us yesterday at 4pm, after spending weeks pulling together field Day station antennas and gear. That is all he would talk about – a great station on the air! He was ready for Field Day!

He and Janet (KL7MF, Chip's wife of 45 years) fought this fast-spreading cancer for months, with never a word to most anyone about his heroic fight. He passed away peacefully, with dignity, at his home, with Janet and his cat at his side. He gracefully closed his eyes, with piles of field Day equipment and cables he prepared, ready for deployment, right next to his chair."

Chip never complained, never let on to his fight, and always had a smile for the upcoming Field Day event. So professional. He was always total positive in all that he could do for ham radio operators.

What a gentleman – a true fighter to the end. We are all heartbroken."

RIP Chip!

MY SMALLEST GO KIT BAG

My new, and smallest 3.25" x 1.75" x 4.75" Go Bag is small enough to fit in just about any pants, coat, vest, pocket. You ask, "What is in this pocket bag? The answer is a Digirig (digirig.net) for rig control and audio in/ out modem for ham digital modes including, but not limited to, VARA, VARA FM and VARA Chat. In addition, there is a USB Isolator, 3-inch-long USB C to USB C cable to connect the Digirig to my Microsoft Surface Go table computer. Up here on LI we also use Olivia 8-500 for digital net traffic. The Olivia nets usually immediately follow the voice nets.

Lastly, inside the bag is an inline TRRS (tip-ring-ring-sleeve) jack and plug with a 100K resistor to drop the input level from the radio to the Digirig. This is in lieu of cutting a trace on the Digirig's PCB. Be careful if you buy a Digirig and decide to cut the described trace. It is not for the faint of heart.

With the case I carry a single Digirig cable for audio in/out and rig control for radios with a 6 pin DIN jack. I recently added one more cable. It is the Yaesu CT-141 8 pin to 6 pin adapter for the Yaesu FTM-400 and FTM-100. This little bag contents allows me to do just about any digital modes on HF, VHF, UHF transceiver from over 55 models radios from Icom, Kenwood, and Yaesu radios. Not bad for a Go Kit that is so small. This allows me to interface to all my radios, Town of Islip NY, Town of Babylon, and County of Suffolk, NY in any of their EOCs, either as the primary connection or as backup in case their digital interface goes down. Remember, I moved back to Long Island in late 2021. I also packed a small button compass "just in case".

By carrying one additional cable I can interface to Anytone, Baofeng, Kenwood HTs. There is a VARA FM node 9 miles from my house. I have an additional cable for TRRS jack Yaesu HTs, if needed. My fourth Digirig cable is for my Xiegu G-90. So the four Digirig cables most of the radios and HTs I interface with are covered.

The case is small enough that I put it on my belt anytime I leave the house for a deployment, or possible deployment, "just in case". For those thinking ahead, yes I also have a larger Go kit, 8" x 6" x 2", for my "Signalink" digital interface, and its radio cables, if needed. Some EOC's here use Signalinks since Digirigs have not caught on widely yet. The Digirig with its cables is less expensive than the Signalink (www.tigertronics.com) and its cables. The last two items on a small ring on the outside of the case are a "Nano LED flashlight, and a whistle. You just never know!

Preparation, agility, versatility are essential in our standby ability.

73 es de W2PB, Paul

Maryland Slow Net

I said it before, and probably will say it again, for you that have joined Straight Key Century Club (SKCC) and FISTS, on the air practice can be had, at your speed, on the Maryland Slow Net (MSN) that is on every day (but Sunday's sometimes) on 3.683 at 7:30 PM. The net control will slow down to your speed and there is a call for "students" where a member of the net will give you a radiogram that outlines procedures of traffic handling on CW, again at YOUR speed.

Check in by sending a letter, usually a letter in the suffix of your call (I send an "X" usually) and then the NCS will answer with that letter. Then give your call sign, again at your speed, and say "GE (good evening) and usually "QRU" (will receive traffic). NCS will acknowledge you.

You can ask for a practice radiogram by asking for "practice 1 (other other number up to 30) and the NCS will assign someone to you. If you have questions and would like to join the MSN, but are not sure of how, check with me, N3KRX, and I'll guide you through it. It is fun, simple, and you really learn how to send traffic using CW.

Useless Fact of the Month

Until 1950, U.S. Weathermen Were Forbidden From Talking About Tornadoes. (Probably didn't know what they were!)

Clams can live for more than 400 years. (Think about that with your next bowl of chowder)

The average person has about five dreams per night, or 1,825 dreams per year. (Probably not about that QSO with the P5 station!)

The first airline stewardesses in the U.S. were all nurses. (And they were probably all 60 yoa!)

On average, more than 100,000 people a day get a speeding ticket in the United States. (Except for "We Ride 2 Fast"!!!)

In 1835, a house painter (Richard Lawrence) who believed he was the King of England tried twice to assassinate U.S. President Andrew Jackson at a funeral. Both guns misfired and Jackson, 67, beat the man with his cane. One of the people who restrained the would-be assassin was Davy Crockett.

A man from Texas died after attempting to play Russian roulette with a semi-automatic pistol. He was apparently unaware that semi-automatic pistols automatically insert a cartridge into the firing chamber when the gun is cocked. He was posthumously awarded a Darwin Award.

Tidbit of Information of the Month Department

Experts Predict "Slightly Below Average" 2023 Hurricane Season

Jason Metz,-Editor

After a 2022 "near normal" Atlantic hurricane season, Colorado State University (CSU) predicts that the 2023 Atlantic hurricane season will be "slightly below average" with 13 named storms and major hurricanes making landfall. The university team projected six hurricanes, two of which are predicted to be major hurricanes. CSU bases its hurricane season prediction on four models that use 25 to 40 years of historical hurricane seasons and evaluate conditions that include:

- Atlantic sea surface temperatures
- El Niño
- Sea level pressures

- Vertical wind shear levels (change in speed and direction of winds with height in the atmosphere)

The CSU team cites El Niño as a primary factor for the slightly below average 2023 Atlantic hurricane season. El Niño can increase upper-level westerly winds across the Caribbean into the tropical Atlantic and tear apart hurricanes as they try to form.

But the CSU team says there are conflicting signals between an abnormally warm tropical and subtropical Atlantic and a potentially robust El Niño. The team stresses there is more uncertainty than normal with this year's prediction. The 2023 hurricane season's activity will be about 80% of the average season from 1991 to 2020, according to CSU. Last year's hurricane season saw about 75% of the average season.

This year's hurricane season is exhibiting characteristics similar to 1969, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2014 and 2015, says Phil Klotzbach, research scientist in the Department of Atmospheric Science and lead author of the report.

CSU will issue hurricane forecast updates on June 1, July 6 and Aug. 3.

A Note From A SKCC Member

The US Navy has a long history of using signal lamps (Aldis lamps) for ship-to-ship communication, and the mode is nicknamed "Nancy." (Obscure but related fact: the underwater "telephone" used for acoustic communication with submarines is nicknamed "Gertrude." I got to use the Gertrude once during our post-overhaul sea trials.)

When my ship was in overhaul (a long time ago), our Navigator decided he was going to teach the Wardroom officers Morse using a hand held signal lamp. The experiment didn't last long, as his Morse was pretty rusty. I think the first letter he tried to send was "J" but he signaled "dah dah dah dit." I said, "That's not a 'J'!". That pretty much ended our first and only Morse training session. :-)

Thanks to Bill, KR8L, for the post

SOS via Auto~Alarm

Not very much seems to have been written about an important maritime safety radio system called the AUTO-ALARM installed on ships of many flags. A large number of vessels such as freighters and tankers today have only one Radio Officer aboard, leaving the 500 kHz international distress frequency uncovered when he is off duty.

The AUTO-ALARM in effect "watches" the distress channel in his absence. Another vessel in distress transmits a prescribed signal on 500 kHz and the AAs on vessels 500 miles or more away will sound a loud bell in the RO's quarters as well as on the ship's bridge. When it sounds off the ROs rub the sleep out of their eyes, man the 500 kHz frequency and await the stricken vessel's standard SOS procedure. Some shipping interests have dispensed with a Radio Officer aboard, in which case the AA is useless since it's full function requires the follow-up of a human operator.

The modus operand! of the AA system is as follows: The RO of the vessel in trouble initiates an automatic keying device for his 500 kHz transmitter. It sends the AA signal for one minute, consisting of a minimum of 4 dashes of four seconds duration. However any 500 kHz equipped vessel can trigger the AA on other vessels by keying manually synchronized dashes through watching the radioroom clock. This has four-second markings around the perimeter of it's face, pointed up by the sweep second hand. The 500 kHz radio equipment of most vessels will cover an area of at least 500 miles in daylight and much greater distances at night. Coastal stations commonly repeat a ship's AA signal to ensure coverage of all ships in the area. Of course, with the Coastal Station's higher power such action usually triggers the AA system of ships far beyond the practical range of rescue. Better this than some vessel within the rescue area not picking up the AA signal because of weak signals, QRM, etc.

The newest Mari-sat satellite system provides for a distress call by merely punching a red SOS button on the ship's satellite transmitter which instantly commandeers a priority satellite channel direct to the Sea Rescue Services. Some equipment now ties in with a satellite navigator system and automatically transmits the distress vessel's position in latitude and longitude as well as it's identity.

However, nothing seems to be absolutely fail-safe. When, in 1980, the cruiser M/V PRINSENDAM (PJTA) off the coast of Alaska (carrying some 500 persons) developed a fire which went out of control, the RO called up the priority satellite channel but the COMSAT operator in Washington for some reason connected him with a hospital orderly in

Kodiak. In frustration he went to 500 kHz and initiated the AA signal. He got an immediate response from several vessels and rescue operations went into effect.

According to the FCC, there were some 350 vessels who copied the SOS on 500 kHz while only one vessel responded to the alarm on 2182 kHz emergency voice channel, operating from the bridge, and none heard the calls on the VHF voice emergency channel No. 16.

Thanks to “Morsum Magnificat” magazine summer 1988 issue

How to Avoid Post-Disaster Donation Scams

Sometimes it takes a disaster to bring out the good in people. You see it every time a disaster strikes, whether it's flooding in Florida or an earthquake in a foreign country — people want to help.

Unfortunately, these circumstances also bring out the bad — the scammers, who will try to take advantage of people's good will, their willingness and desire to help, and prey on their emotions. They'll try to steal the contributions of those who want to help. Whether it's via phone call, website or social media, if you're going to donate to a cause, you have to be on your toes and do some homework to make sure that your money or other donations go to a legitimate entity. “Unfortunately, we live in a day and age when if you're not expecting a phone call and you don't recognize that number, even if the number says ‘Save the Children’ or ‘Red Cross,’ don't believe it because it can easily be spoofed,” said Ally Armeson, program director at the Cybercrime Support Network. “Caller ID can also be spoofed.”

Scammers have gotten pretty good at spoofing websites as well and they can make a legitimate-looking argument for donating on social media. Unfortunately, without taking some time to check and make sure the entity is legitimate, it's easy to fall for these scams. “Scammers watch the news. Anything that they think is going to pull at the heartstrings,” Armeson said, will attract the bad element trying to take advantage of people's emotions. “Social media is feeding into that emotion too, but it's harder to verify.”

As Armeson said, if someone calls and says they're from the Red Cross and they would like you to donate, take the time to research. Never let them rush you into giving right away. If you feel rushed, hang up and do some homework. “It's important to look at the URL,” Armeson said. “You can Google that and find out what the URL should really look like.” She said email addresses are another thing. To use the Red Cross as an example again, you can easily search for the organization online to see what the email address should really look like. And never click on a link in an email; it could be a phishing email that will send you to a bad website.

“Websites often come in conjunction with a phishing email,” Armeson said. “I'm a scammer and I email you and say, ‘Hey, I'm from the Red Cross and here's a website because I'm sure you've been watching the news and saw that this earthquake happened. Please click here,’ and then you go to a website that looks really good.” “Really slow down when you're getting that email, and never click on a URL,” she continued. “That's a given even if it's from your mother.” A lot of times a URL will look good, but if you pay attention and look closely, you can find an extra letter or other slight modification. “You have to be looking for it,” Armeson said.

Use a search engine; Google it and make sure it's legitimate.

GoFundMe pages are common and also difficult to verify. “I see my friend has created a GoFundMe page. It's my ‘friend,’ so I'm going to go and look at this page,” Armeson said. “But it's hard to see the chain of events and where it originally came from.” Again, Google that person or whomever started the campaign, look for comments from people that may have donated. “Sometimes it's just best to stick with the ones you know,” Armeson said.

Scammers always come out of the woodwork after natural disasters, and FEMA has some words of caution. Doing the following can help protect you from being scammed after a local disaster. DHS, FEMA, SBA and other federal agencies will never charge you for disaster assistance. Always ask to see I.D. FEMA personnel will always have an official identification badge.

Do not offer any personal information unless you are speaking with a verified FEMA representative.

Stay tuned to trusted local media for updates from your local officials on disaster fraud and scams.

Check with local law enforcement to ensure your identity is protected

Thanks to Government Technology online

The Cat That Learned Morse

Here's a priceless story about a black cat, told to me by a radio officer, who swears by the Great Hook Block that every word is true. It concerns a Black Cat they had in one of his old ships and this cat was fascinated by the Morse signals which came from the loudspeaker in the radio office. The cat used to spend hours in the office, sitting in front of the speaker, just as though it was in a Cat's Heaven.

So, during the long night watches he conceived the idea of teaching the cat the Morse signals of the ship's call sign. For weeks he imitated the ship's call on a buzzer, simultaneously tapping the cat's starboard fore paw on the office table.

After a time, the cat would recognize the ship's call sign when other ships called and it would stand up and mew. When he "turned-in" at night he used to leave the speaker on, with "Maggie" keeping guard with a beatific expression.

Early one morning weeks later, in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, he found "Maggie" in his bunk, frantically pawing his face. So he dashed into the radio office, and discovered another of the company's ships calling for medical assistance for one of the firemen who had symptoms of appendicitis.

(Reprinted from "The Thirteenth Voyage" by Fred G. Shaw in the August, 1984, edition of "Sea Breezes" by kind permission of the publishers.

Thanks to "Morsum Magnificat" Magazine

Joke of the Month

HOW WELL DOES COLD WATER CLEAN?

A man went to visit his 90 year old grandfather in a secluded, rural area of the state. After spending the night, his grandfather prepared breakfast for him consisting of eggs and bacon. He noticed a film-like substance on his plate and he questioned his grandfather...."are these plates clean?"

His grandfather replied.... "Those plates are as clean as cold water can get them so go on and finish your meal." That afternoon, while eating the hamburgers his grandfather made for lunch, he noticed tiny specks around the edge of this plate, and a substance that looked like dried egg yolks...so he asked again....."are you sure these plates are clean?"

Without looking up from his hamburger, the grandfather says....."I told you before, those dishes are as clean as cold water can get them, now don't ask me about it anymore!"

Later that afternoon, he was on his way out to get dinner in a nearby town. As he was leaving, Grandfather's dog started to growl and would not let him pass.... "Grandfather, your dog won't let me out."

Without diverting his attention from the football game he was watching, Grandfather shouted, "COLDWATER, GET OUT OF THE WAY!!"

Quote of the Month

"Start every day off with a smile and get it over with."
W. C. Fields