

SHORT CIRCUITS

Newsletter of the Kent County Amateur Radio Club

2023

Officers		Repeaters
President	Paul Tuley N3BUH	146.970 (-) 77hz pl Dover
Vice-President	Jim Moore KC3BTV	146.910 (-) 77hz pl Camden (down)
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

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

- August 13 **Valley Forge Hamfest**
Mid-Atlantic Amateur Radio Club (MARC)
Kimberton Fire Company Fairgrounds, 762 Pike Springs Rd., Phoenixville, PA 19460
Contact: Bob Palin , N3JIZ, PO Box 557 Eagleville, PA 19408 Phone: 610-420-1535
Talk-In: 145.130- / 147.060+ (PL 131.8) **Email:** hamfest@marc-radio.org
- September 9 **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
Hours: 10 AM – 2 PM
- September 10 **ARRL Southern New Jersey Section Convention and Hamfest**
Gloucester County ARC
Gloucester County 4H Fairgrounds, 235 Bridgeton Pike (Rt 77), Mullica Hill, NJ 08062
Contact: Sheldon Parker , K2MEN, 643 Betty Rose Ave. Gibbstown, NJ 08027
Phone: 609-417-7802 **Talk-In:** 147.180 PL 131.8 **Email:** sheldonparker@comcast.net
- October 01 **CARA Fest**
Columbia Amateur Radio Association
Howard County Fairgrounds, 2210 Fairgrounds Road, West Friendship, MD 21794
Contact: Michael Olson , K3RMO, PO Box 911 Columbia, MD 21044
Phone: 410-497-4125 **Talk-In:** 147.390 MHz/R+ 156.7 Hz

Email: k3rmo@columbiaara.org

October 22 **Carroll County, MD Hamfest**
Carroll County Amateur Radio Club
Door to Virtue Masonic Lodge, 46 Monroe St., Westminster, MD 21157
Contact: Pete Hiltz , WV3S, 5623 LaSalle Ln Sykesville, MD 21784
Phone: 443-280-0385 **Talk-In:** 145.410 (-) , 114.8 Hz PL
Email: radio-k3pzn@googlegroups.com

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
Hours: 10 AM – 2 PM

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

Editor's Comments

In the Tid-Bit section you will find a notice that was sent out by ARRL President Rick Roderick concerning an increase in dues and now the magazines published by ARRL will be costing us extra, if you want the printed type. Online access will be free, at least for now anyway. So if you like to read your magazines online, just a dues increase. If you like to read while in a compromised position, it's going to cost you.

Why the increase? Well, did you participate in the member survey earlier this year? Of all of the ARRL members in the Atlantic division, less than 12% of them answered the survey. We have 13,796 ARRL members in the Atlantic division, and less than 1,650 members total responded to the survey to let their feelings known! That's the areas of Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Washington, DC, and less than 1,650 of the ARRL members bothered to take a few minutes and let their choices be known! That's sad!

Now we have over 3,000,000 hams world wide, and 779,000 in the USA, and 37,451 in the Atlantic Division (DE 1,814, MD 10,913, PA 24,913, and DC 505) but only 20,000 hams that are members of the ARRL responded to the survey from the whole country out of a ARRL membership of 158,000. That's under 13% of the total membership! And we ask why things are messed up in Newington? ARRL members need to let your elected representatives know your feelings about situations and the direction of the ARRL. Will it help? Certainly can't hurt! (Delaware, by the way, is the 49th state in the nation with issued licenses, beating only North Dakota with 1,546.)

One of the ways that we, as amateurs, can show we need support from the League is to participate in events. Adding to the participation in public service events, taking part in operating events such as Field Day, POTA, and IOTA shows the people in Newington, and the public, support for the hobby. With more support, the League gets more members, and the available money will increase. Maybe then QST will again be a benefit of just being a member.

President's Column

Hello Everyone,
I think the high heat is over, at least for the near future.

As we near the end of summer be thinking about the upcoming joint exercise with Sussex county and Winter Field Day.

My tower project is nearing completion. Currently I'm putting the finishing touches on the entry panel and ground radial connections. The heat has caused the loss of several days of construction.

We welcomed a new member into our family since we lost our 16-year-old greyhound Guidon a few weeks ago. I forgot how much time it takes to train a youngster (1 1/2). His name is Ruckus, and he lives up to it.

73 for now,
Paul

Vice-President's Column

About mistakes...

The other day I was reading a very interesting article by Randy Duncan, a commercial airline pilot for a major airline, about mistakes in flying an airliner. Part of his article is reprinted below:

"I learned very early in my airline career that moving on [from mistakes] is a very, very important skill. I had a couple of bad simulator sessions where I made a silly mistake early in the session and because I couldn't let it go, I got uptight and started making more and more mistakes and getting more and more agitated. I really presented myself as a poor pilot to the instructors. One took me aside and said I had, had, had to accept the error, tell myself I learned from it and move on with a clean conscience. He said that being a perfectionist is a weakness. He said I had to learn to work hard on accuracy and accept mistakes with ease. That's why they pay for two people in the cockpit. People are not infallible. It's not the mistake that's important, it's the recovery."

You may ask yourself, what in the world does this have to do with ham radio? We all make mistakes but how we handle them is critical. One thing that people have problems with in learning Morse Code is forgetting about the missed character. When we spend time thinking about the missed character, another three characters have gone by. Now instead of missing one character we have missed four. I know in my own quest to learn code that has been my experience. Quoting from a movie: "Let it Go!" It's a lesson I need to learn.

Jim Moore KC3BTV
VP KCARC

From the Section Manager's Shack

Section Managers Column August 2023

Well the ARRL Board of Directors had their meeting and the expected changes in dues and publications were voted in. Dues went up, and if you want the magazines in print, there's an extra fee for that. I won't belabor the issues that lead to the changes, nor the changes themselves. There is, and will be, plenty in print, pro and con, for you to study and digest. My take on this, it was necessary, and a response to the way information is disseminated today. Let's accept it, honor the work and thought that went into the decisions, and move forward.

We're a month away from the historic peak month for Hurricanes. September is National Hurricane month, and it's also National Preparedness Month. Are you and your family ready? Now is a good time for you and yours to review your family disaster plan. You do have one, don't you? Have you checked your disaster supplies, are they outdated yet? How about fresh gasoline for the generator; and of course you will put fuel stabilizer in it, won't you?

My current term as Section Manager ends December 31st this year. I will be running for the position again in the coming election this fall. My current term is only eighteen months rather than the usual two years. I haven't yet accomplished all that I set out to do, but am happy that some progress that has been made. There is still, however, a lot more work to be done.

Activities are slowly starting up again, are you gonna get 'radioactive'? Ham radio is a hobby of doing, and in doing we can demonstrate our communication capabilities, to our neighbors, to the community, and to the local and state agencies. If you want to protect the hobby, get out there and "do"! Our frequencies are definitely a "use them or lose them" proposition. There are two large MS Bike events coming, there will be Apple Scrapple in October, we are still trying to schedule a Section Emergency Test (SET). There is a bit of irony here, you don't get the privilege of scheduling an emergency, but you have to find a convenient date to

practice for one. Elsewhere in this issue, Bill Saunders will again share his philosophy, “that which is not tested, will not work”. That is so true.

The station at the home QTH is slowly coming back to life. The upper HF bands (20, 15, 10) are working well. The lower HF (160, 75-80, 40) still have some antenna issues to sort out. The VHF/UHF is now back to just 144 and 440, on the lower height antenna. I lost 220 when the FT-736 died – again. So I can now say, “see you on the bands”! Let’s all get ‘radioactive’.

73, John, K3PFW

The Emcomm Corner

The best way to increase comfort with a skill set is to use it so much that it becomes second nature. When you first began to ride a bicycle you probably had a tendency to make wild corrections of the handlebars to maintain your balance but with practice the corrections become so small that you don't realize you make them as you ride. The same is true both in running and participating in ham radio nets. This is one of the purposes of the weekly Saturday morning nets. It gives people the opportunity to participate in and run a net in a low stress environment. The time to learn to ride a bike is not when you are being chased by someone. Even though we have volunteers scheduled to do the nets every week there is always room for more volunteers to serve as net control stations. Just ask. There is a copy of the script published on the club's web site.

Over the next few months during the EmComm meetings, part of the time will be spent hitting the high points of the ICS classes that are a part of the ARES certification requirements. The actual classes are free online courses which help us fit into the overall emergency response plan. Not as fun as playing radio but a necessary evil.

Look elsewhere in this newsletter for public service opportunities like the MS Bike events (DE and NJ) and Apple Scrapple. Join in as they are lots of fun. Also, planning for the annual SET (Simulated Emergency Test) is underway with details to be worked out very shortly.

Jim KC3BTV
Kent County EC

AUXCOMM News

Training Day

The title of that 2001 Denzel Washington film planted the seed for this month’s article. Many of you have heard my mantra “That which does not get tested will not work”. This principle is usually directed at devices or systems but is just as applicable to people and procedures. We train and test (or should) to better prepare ourselves so that we are better prepared to serve others. In our day-to-day lives we plan and allocate time to eat, sleep, cover the Net, get to the hamfest (or breakfast), club meetings, doctor & dentist appointments (seems like more all the time!), etc. When was the last time you had a “Training Day” on your calendar?

Been doing this for “XX” decades and seen/done it all? Yeah, sure. There is ALWAYS something new to learn, to apply, and to teach. Teach? The Roman philosopher Seneca said, “While we teach, we learn”. Dubbed “the protégé effect”, this principle acknowledges that the best way to understand something is to explain it to someone else. There ARE new hams and there is a definite need to bring them along. Learn something and share it with others, especially the newbies. Who were your mentors? How about paying it forward?

We live in a connected age where there are so many sources of new information available to us, most at no or low cost. Here are just a few sources:

FEMA – Besides the ICS100, 200, 700, 800 courses that are necessary to understand ICS, NIMS, and the rest of the “alphabet soup” acronyms that we now work within, FEMA has, as of this writing, 208 FREE on-line courses available through their Emergency Management Institute (EMI) website

<https://training.fema.gov/is/> Most of these can be completed within a few hours and cover a very diverse range of topics. I knocked out more than 20 of these during the COVID shutdown, just killing time. The process is simple and well-documented on their website.

DEMA – The Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) offers in-person courses on a variety of Emergency Management topics. Visit their website <https://dema.delaware.gov/training/> and look at the Training & Activity Calendar link for information about scheduled courses including date(s), time(s), location, and any prerequisites. Did I mention that these are also free???

ARRL – In addition to the magazines, numerous books on just about everything ham radio, and other resources available for sale at the <http://www.arrl.org/> store there are links to training courses (some taught locally including EC-001 & EC-016) from <http://arrl.org/emergency-communications-training>

YouTube – A whole universe of information out here, including Ham Radio and Emergency Communications. If you don't know how to access any of it, ask your grandkids. They'll know.

Local Exercises – Get involved with your local club and/or EmComm organization. There are ample opportunities for exercises and training. Learn something and put it to work serving others. Did you participate in Field Day? Before this year is out there will be several local events that require “feet on the street” and opportunities to learn or lead. Some of these include the DE SET (late Sept or early Oct), the MS Bike Ride (10/7), Bridgeville Apple Scapple (10/14), and the Rehoboth Marathon (12/2).

Invest in your knowledge and skills by proactively making an appointment with yourself to learn something new, then share that new (or old) knowledge with others. Put a “Training Day” on your calendar regularly and put it to use investing in yourself and others. 73's

Bill, N3ID

Club Happenings

At the Meeting.....

If you missed the last meeting you missed a couple really good presentations. The first was the report on Field Day operations. Seems we made the best score that KCARC has had since 2012 when we were at the C&R Center and ran as a 6A. Most of the score came from our CW tent and was obtained by Eric, WG3J, who operated with us this year. Apparently we made a total of 1990 contacts this year, which was not bad, since the trailer was vacant for most of the night.

Also we had an excellent presentation by Pete, KC3MVS, on the Parks of the Air (POTA) program that has been going on for a while. POTA gives people who are under restrictions at their homes, to go to a state or federal park and operate a portable operation. There are many operators that are looking to make contact with POTA “activators” and the activators want “hunters” to contact them. Contact Pete if you have more questions concerning the POTA program.

Lewes Amateur Radio Society (LARS) Meeting

All: the Lewes Amateur Radio Society (LARS) will have its monthly meeting Wednesday August 2nd at Grotto's Grand Slam in Lewes at 12:00. For more information contact Rita McClannahan, K3RMM, at mcclanahanrita@gmail.com. An effort is underway to get the club up and running again. It's a lunch meeting, order off the menu, and enjoy meeting local hams.

Later, 73

John K3PFW

SM Delaware

Field Day Log Submissions

“2023 Field Day is in the logs, and to start planning for next year. To me, Field Day is one of the best weekends of the year for ham radio. You have the chance to get out with friends, get on the air, show new hams what HF is like, and have some great food. It's the celebration of ham radio that can be enjoyed by everyone”, writes Michael Walters, W8ZY in the ARRL Club Newsletter. The deadline for submissions has passed but you can see who sent in logs by going to ARRL website at field-day.arrl.org/fdentriescvd.php. There have been 4192 entries sent in as of 7/22/2023.

For Those Members Who Are SKCC People

Greetings SKCC family

I know many of you shared my shock and sorrow at the recent notification (last month) that long-time member W4RQ (SKCC 8699S) unexpectedly joined the ranks of "Silent Keys". Rich was an important member of the SKCC management team and a good operator; he will be missed greatly.

This email is to notify you that I have taken over Rich's former position as "Event Manager - Slow Speed Saunter (SSS)". I would encourage you to join in on the SSS; it is the first day of each month. Remember this is NOT a contest - it is an operating event. Its original intent was to duplicate the friendly and low threat level conditions of the ARRL annual "Straight Key Night" that has been going on for decades on 01 January of each year. I would especially encourage our new operators, retreads that are "re-learning" cw, and any nervous Nellie ops; this is a great way for you to break the ice and actually get on the air - at any speed you are comfortable with. Many of us "veterans" (my novice license was in 1958!) really enjoy working with new and slow speed ops; we were all there at one point in our ham careers.

Similar to "contest type events", we have a report form and a soap box for each month's SSS - but I want to remind you again this is not a contest of any type. We actually list the reported stations in alphabetical order of your SPC, to remove the focus from "how many QSOs" reported.

Please contact me if any questions, and in the meantime - see you on the next (and many more) - SSS events.

73, Dave W1DV
1433S

For Sale...

Bought a new house rig and need to make space.

ICOM 756 PRO2 with all normal accessories plus PS-125 Power Supply \$800 plus shipping

ICOM 746 non-PRO with all normal accessories plus PS-125 Power Supply \$600 plus shipping

Radios are in excellent condition and will be shipped in ORIGINAL Boxes (Radios only) from non-smoking shack. Home number is 302-538-6334 and email is wemccourt@yahoo.com.

Bill WF1L

Useless Facts on the Month

In 1977, we received a signal from space that lasted 72 seconds. We still don't know how or where it came from. (A busy signal from ET??)

An 11-year-old girl gave Pluto its name. (The dog or the planet??)

June 30, 1908

An asteroid exploded above Tunguska in Siberia, leaving 800 square miles of scorched or blown-down trees. (Lotta firewood for the taking!)

Barbie, whose full name is Barbara Millicent Roberts, holds a special place in popular culture. Created by Ruth Handler, Barbie was named after Handler's daughter, Barbara, while her boyfriend, Ken, was named after her son, Kenneth. Barbie hails from the fictional town of Willows, Wisconsin. Her official birthday is celebrated on March 9, 1959, which marks the momentous occasion when she was introduced to the toy industry at the New York Toy Fair, forever capturing the hearts and imaginations of children worldwide. (And she has a pink car!!)

Helen Keller graciously dedicated her autobiography, "The Story of My Life" to renowned inventor Alexander Graham Bell. Keller, who became blind and deaf at 18 months, had the fortune of crossing paths with Bell during her childhood when her parents sought his assistance. Bell connected the Keller family with the

Perkins Institute through which Helen met her beloved teacher Anne Sullivan. Bell remained an unwavering pillar of support, offering not only personal guidance but also financial aid to ensure Helen's living expenses were met. (Not just an inventor!!)

Tidbit of Information of the Month Department

A Message from ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR

Dear ARRL members,

Yesterday, the ARRL Board of Directors completed their second annual meeting. I'm writing to let you know that they made the tough, but necessary, decision to increase the regular membership dues rate to \$59 a year starting January 1, 2024 (see 2024 Dues Rates). Additionally, we have chosen to separate the printed, mailed magazine from regular membership. Members will be able to choose whether they want to add-on a print subscription to any of our magazines including QST, On the Air, QEX, and NCJ. All members will continue to have online, digital access to each of these four magazines and the digital archive as part of their regular membership benefits.

This is only the second time in 22 years that ARRL has raised our dues. It is a necessary part of ensuring ARRL is supported so we can continue to promote and fight hard for our Amateur Radio Service, while providing benefits and services for our members that increase your knowledge and enjoyment of ham radio.

To help us make this decision, we invited every ARRL member to participate in a survey in May. Over 20,000 members responded. We know from the survey results that most of you will find the new rate reasonable, or even ask why we didn't set it higher. We also know that some may find the rate is too high. As I've shared with many of you during my visits at hamfests and conventions, each of us has a responsibility to be active participants, and to support ARRL if we want to increase our ranks and ensure a lasting legacy for amateur radio's future. You told us that you value ARRL's advocacy efforts, including spectrum defense, standing up to regulators and policymakers, and our work in other areas that defend, promote, and grow amateur radio - including STEM outreach to schools, teachers, and youth. There is no other organization that is working harder to advance a vision that allows any citizen to explore, develop, and practice radio communications and radio technology. Your feedback showed us the many benefits, services, and programs you use - from Logbook of The World, to the work done by the ARRL Lab to test equipment for product reviews. While our magazines topped the list of benefits, many of you also shared that your reading preferences have changed. Some of you prefer print, and increasingly members prefer digital. As a result, for those who prefer print, you will be able to subscribe to QST and/or On the Air magazine. Again, all members will continue to have access to the digital editions of all four ARRL magazines.

Have you ever heard a Life Member say, "I got a good deal when I signed up for Life Membership 25 (or 30, or 40...) years ago." They're right! They got a good deal, but continuing to serve Life members is not sustainable without making some changes. So, we're going to freeze new applications for the program, not adding any new Life Memberships until we can price the offering to be revenue neutral over its term. And, again, as more members prefer digital, we'll be asking current Life Members to opt-in if they want to continue to receive QST by mail. The cost of doing business goes up every year. During the last couple of years, the costs associated with printing and postage have increased significantly. We've cut and delayed hiring for some positions on our professional staff - one of the smallest teams we've had staffing our headquarters in Newington, Connecticut, in years. We are also continuing to examine other cost-saving measures, but we cannot go further without reducing or eliminating benefits and programs which our members have told us are important to them.

I can assure you that the ARRL Board exercises due diligence and oversight in making sure your association is a good steward of your membership dollars. The reality is that ARRL does a lot - in fact much more than dues cover. ARRL shares your passion for amateur radio. We are committed to strengthening and growing our community, and protecting our rights to use and experiment on our amateur radio spectrum. We have a 109-year track record that includes YOU as part of that ongoing legacy of support for amateur radio and ARRL.

73

Rick Roderick, K5UR

“How Small Can You Go?”

I grew up watching a lot of 1960's TV. Spy movies, adventure series and naturally “Gilligan's Island” (GI). In case you are not familiar with “GI”, it is based on a group of divergent people being stranded on a desert island. As I watched “GI” I fantasized of being with them and cobbling some type transmitter together to get us rescued. The cobbling had been completed in 1963 with my first pocket 40M QRP CW transceiver. Ah, the good old 2N2222A transistor!

Through the years I wanted to assemble a small radio case with what I would need to operate QRP on an island. Success! My current case is a water resistant molded case (external 8.5”x3”x3”) that holds my Trusdx 80-20M 5 watt SSB/CW/Digital transceiver, a linked End Fed Half Wave Antenna for 20/40M, POA log form, CEPT Notice, lithium rechargeable 12v/ 2-Hr battery, wall wart charger, powered mini speaker, CW key, FT-8 cables that interface to my iPhone, 10 feet of RG-174 U coax with BNC connectors, a QRP Broadcast Interference QRP filter (www.k9dp.com), cables, accessories. May I point out, I already live on an island - Long Island. So I already have my Island location. If I want a little change in scenery, It is easy to take the ferry over to Fire Island. Essentially a 32 mile long inhabited sand bar off the south shore of Long Island. I have all I need between location, and QRP/POTA transceiver case to operate. I operate usually from the fireman's park adjacent to the Ocean Bay Park Fire House property. This is because the Chief and two Assistant Chiefs are relatives of my wife.

The 2 Amp-Hr battery affords me multiple hours of operation since the Trusdx transceiver takes 80 mA on receive, 100 mA on modest volume, and 500mA on transmit. The final is 75-85% efficient. If you are unfamiliar with the Trusdx transceiver, check it out at <https://dl2man.de> . The radio can be purchased as a kit, or pre assembled and tested. The cost is sub \$130 depending on the kit or wired and the source vendor. The first thing to do is search out “Menu Settings” on the web. There are several simple menu selection items that will enhance the reception. Specifically menu item 1.8 (turn AGC Off) and 1.11(change ATT from 2 to 4).

The second thing is to purchase a small self powered mini speaker (Qinlongo Mini speaker at www.amazon.com). Advancing the volume on the Trusdx transceiver, using the internal speaker passed 10 or 11, results in howling; hence the need for the external speaker. If you use earbuds, there is no howling.

The small transceiver has variable receive bandwidth/mode, SWR bridge, RF power meter, VOX, CW memories, and with the new firmware called Beta 2H, even a spectrum display when the Menu button is pressed down and hold it, digital readout, and operates digital modes with ease.

So I have operated on an island, from the “GI” TV set, and have one small case for QRP (less than 1 lb). The case is easy to carry in luggage; it's small, lightweight-let's go!.

So enjoy the bands, and try something new!

De W2PB - Paul

Morse Code is still thriving in amateur radio, 24 years after its last commercial use.

On July 12, 1999, the original dot/dash system, invented by Samuel F. B. Morse in 1837, gave way to the rapid development of analog and digital communications. The final message sent in Morse code for commercial use was the same one that Morse hammered out on his telegraph key 155 years earlier in 1844, which was, "What hath God wrought?" But this time the message was followed by SK, meaning silent key, or deceased. The International Maritime Organization replaced Morse code with the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System -- an automated ship-to-shore and ship-to-ship system that use satellites and/or terrestrial radio systems with digital selective calling technology. Morse Code is also still used in aviation. Pilots listen to a Morse code identifier to verify that their navigation receivers are tuned to the correct radio aid, such as a VHF Omni-Directional Range (VOR) or Instrument Landing System (ILS) approach guidance system. Railroads stopped using Morse code in the mid-1970s. While Morse code is no longer used commercially, it is still an integral part of amateur radio. Amateur radio operators are no longer required to learn Morse code to obtain their license, but many learn the code on their own or by using study guides and taking classes. Every day, amateurs around the world use Morse code to communicate with each other, test their radio equipment, or pass along friendly information. Morse code is essential in helping people communicate during disasters and emergencies because of its signal ability to penetrate adverse weather

issues and propagation disturbance. ARRL offers a variety of resources for those interested in learning Morse code. Visit <http://www.arrrl.org/learning-morse-code> for more information.

Thanks to the ARRL Letter

U.S. Residents Nervous About Disaster Preparedness

In a survey of 1,000 adults, 86 percent said they were concerned about the increasing intensity and frequency of natural disasters, but just 36 percent said they felt prepared to face a major weather event. The results of a severe disaster weather survey conducted by Motorola this spring revealed that U.S. residents have a growing concern about severe weather and their level of preparedness.

“Severe weather events are occurring year round and challenging residents, as well as seasoned emergency managers in both the public and private sectors,” said Todd Piatt, vice president of Rave Mobile Safety at Motorola Solutions, in a press release.

“Our hope is that this new independent research sheds light on the public’s growing concerns and shifting preferences as weather disasters become more severe,” Piatt said. “These insights can help shape safety steps, considerations and protocols for all stakeholders involved.”

Among the findings was that 66 percent of the 1,000 people surveyed indicated they had missed work because of a severe weather event or natural disaster, and 40 percent said they had been unable to get necessities during that time.

Eighty-six percent said they were concerned about the increasing intensity and frequency of natural disasters, but just 36 percent said they felt prepared to face a major weather event. Most put their faith in first responders rather than relying on their own resources — 93 percent of those surveyed believe that responders are prepared to help their community during a disaster.

As far as communication, 34 percent of respondents like text messages, while 32 preferred mobile safety app alerts from state or local officials as sources of truth during disasters; 35 percent — up from 18 percent a year ago — use online safety profiles or registries to share information with public safety officials.

There was good news as well: 67 percent said they are taking proactive steps by assembling a safety kit and 57 percent have signed up for local emergency notification. Forty-seven percent have created an evacuation or family preparedness plan.

The survey was conducted in May 2023 by Researchscape, an independent market research firm.

Thanks to Government Technology online

Communications from a Family of Hams

It was a thrill making contact with volcanic Bouvet Island, says local ham operator Bob Wertz, marking a 47-year quest and the final confirmed contact with all 340 countries and independent entities. “Very few hams in the world have done this and I only know of eight others in Arizona that have ever contacted all 340 entities,” he said. “This is amazing to me, as there are about 22,000 Hams just in Arizona.”

Bouvet is an island dependency of Norway, located 9,124 miles from Flagstaff between South Africa and South America and closer to the Antarctic. It has been called the most remote island on the planet and is one of the top two locations, along with North Korea, that are the most difficult to contact by ham radio. Wertz recently was recognized for his achievement. “This is one of the highest operating awards given out by American Radio Relay League,” he said. “Reaching DXCC #340 has not been done by many Hams, so it was quite a thrill and honor for me to have accomplished it.” It was also a daunting task, with some fantastic experiences associated with the effort.

“One of the most obscure locations I have talked to is Mount Athos in Greece. There are over 2,000 monks living there at a monastery and they only have one Ham operator. His name was Monk Apollo. I thought this might be the most difficult contact to make in my Ham career; however, one evening in November of 2016, I heard him on the air calling CQ (CQ means calling all Hams). He was using Morse Code to call and I

answered him. I was very excited when he came back to me with a signal report and we made the contact. It wasn't long after that I received his confirming QSL card, and then a year or so after that, he passed away."

Amateur radio is also known as ham radio and amateur radio operators are "hams," a term originally coined by landline telegraphers as a derogatory slang word used to refer to amateur operators who they thought had poor skills, as in "ham actor." Amateurs adopted the term and began using it to describe themselves and their hobby. There are more than 21,900 ham radio operators in Arizona and more than 700,000 in the United States. Ham radio uses the radio frequency spectrum for purposes of non-commercial exchange of messages, such as wireless experimentation, radiosport contesting, private recreation and emergency communications. "To get on the air to use ham radio, it can be surprisingly inexpensive," said Wertz. "You would need a transceiver [radio] and an antenna. Many hams start out with used radios, which can be found for as little as \$250. Then you would need an antenna. New hams are shown how to easily build their own wire antennas, which you can hang in a tree or on a fence post, even in their attic. With this type of setup, you can work the world!" Expensive extras can be added, such as tall towers, antenna tuners, directional antennas, high powered amplifiers and more.

Wertz, who lives on Townsend Winona Road, was born in Waukegan, Illinois, raised in Antioch, Illinois, and then moved to Phoenix in 1965, after he graduated from Eastern Illinois University. He was the owner and operator of Wertz Tire and Auto Service in Flagstaff for 30 years and retired in 2004. His interest in ham radio began early in his life. "When I was about 10 years old, I found a box of what I thought were postcards in the basement of our home in Antioch," he remembered. "Some of them were from other countries and addressed to my father. When I asked him about the cards, he told me he had been a ham radio operator, first licensed in 1932, and those cards were called QSL cards, which were used to confirm contacts made with other hams. One particular card I remember seeing was from South America, and that fascinated me. That discussion with my Dad sparked my interest in ham radio."

Wertz says he comes from a family of hams, as he also had an uncle who was licensed, as well as a brother, a niece and Wertz' own two grandsons. His own career as a ham operator began after he moved to Flagstaff to run a Goodyear dealership. "During that year, I noticed that the Flagstaff community schools were offering a class about getting a ham license," he said. "I enrolled and after taking that class, I got my first, entry level FCC Ham License – and the rest is history," he said. After his dad was relicensed in the 1980s, Wertz and his brother and father, all living in different locations, would rendezvous for a Saturday coffee gathering together while they were on their ham radios. "We did this for many years, and I think about that as being such a special time for all of us," he said.

Probably his most exciting contact, he says, was the one with Bouvet Island. "The DXpedition had been planned for a year but they had so many problems when arriving there by boat that it almost did not happen," he said. "They had very high winds, which caused lots of problems getting equipment to the shore and up a hill to the operating site." They were unable to set up two of the tents and the amplifier didn't make it to shore. Only one radio was able to get on the air. "That radio was set on a bucket that was turned upside down, and the operator sat on the floor of the tent while making calls," Wertz said. "Their signal was very, very weak, so I listened and listened for them and finally heard their Morse code signal and gave them a call. Somehow, we made the contact and I believe I was the only one in Northern Arizona that made contact with them." Wertz entered this last contact on his master list.

By Betsey Bruner, FBN

Thanks to ARRL News

Joke of the Month

Birds and Bees

A child asked his father, "How were people born?"

So his father said, "Adam and Eve made babies, then their babies became adults and made babies, and so on."

The child then went to his mother, asked her the same question and she told him, "We were monkeys then we evolved to become like we are now."

The child ran back to his father and said, "You lied to me!"

His father replied, "No, your mom was talking about her side of the family."

Quote of the Month

"He who dares not offend cannot be honest."

Thomas Paine