

# SHORT CIRCUITS

## Newsletter of the Kent County Amateur Radio Club

July 2024

---

Officers			Repeaters
President	Jim Moore	KC3BTV	146.970 (-) 77hz pl Dover
Vice-President	Hunter Grier	W3CZ	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 Fourth of July

### Happenings

July 9	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
July 11	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:30
July 24	DARC Meeting, Salisbury, see <a href="https://www.qsl.net/darc/">https://www.qsl.net/darc/</a> for details
July 29	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
August 8	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:00
August 13	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
August 26	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
August 28	DARC Meeting, Salisbury, see <a href="https://www.qsl.net/darc/">https://www.qsl.net/darc/</a> for details
September 9	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
September 12	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:00
September 14	VE Testing, Wyoming Methodist Church, 09:00
September 25	DARC Meeting, Salisbury, see <a href="https://www.qsl.net/darc/">https://www.qsl.net/darc/</a> for details
October 8	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
October 10	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:00
October 23	DARC Meeting, Salisbury, see <a href="https://www.qsl.net/darc/">https://www.qsl.net/darc/</a> for details
October 28	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
November 12	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
November 14	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:00
November 20	DARC Dinner Meeting, Salisbury, No program. See <a href="https://www.qsl.net/darc/">qsl.net/darc</a> for details
November 25	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
December 14	VE Testing, Wyoming Methodist Church, 09:00

### Hamfests

July 27	<b>CVARC Annual Hamfest</b> W3ACH Chambersburg Steam and Engine show grounds, 1500 Criders Church Road, Chambersburg, PA 17201 <b>Contact:</b> Jim Stephens, KB3ICU, PO Box 121 Chambersburg, PA 17201 Phone: 717-382-8834 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:cvarcw3ach@gmail.com">cvarcw3ach@gmail.com</a> <b>Talk-In:</b> 147.120+ 100 PL tone
September 7	<b>Delmarva Swapmeet</b> Delmarva Amateur Radio Club QTH of Al Waller K3TKJ, 34087 Old Hickory Rd, Laurel, DE 19956 <b>Contact:</b> Jim Jester, KC3ITR at 443-356-5677 or Arthur Parks N3EAK at <a href="mailto:amparks6@gamil.com">amparks6@gamil.com</a> <b>Talk-in:</b> 146.82 (-) (156.7 PL) Admission Free

September 8 **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: 1-609-417-7802 **Email:** [k2men@comcast.net](mailto:k2men@comcast.net) **Talk-In:** 147.180 PL 131.8

October 6 **CARA Fest 2024**  
**Columbia Amateur Radio Association**  
Howard County Fairgrounds, 221 Fairgrounds Road, West Friendship, MD 21794  
**Contact:** Andy Protigal , N3AWP, 6431 Skipton Drive Hanover, MD 21076  
Phone: 410-218-3815 **Email:** [n3awp@arrl.net](mailto:n3awp@arrl.net) **Talk-In:** 147.390 MHz (+) 156.7 Hz PL

November 2 **Delmarva Swapmeet**  
Delmarva Amateur Radio Club  
QTH of Al Waller K3TKJ, 34087 Old Hickory Rd, Laurel, DE 19956  
**Contact:** Jim Jester, KC3ITR at 443-356-5677 or Arthur Parks N3EAK at [amparks6@gamil.com](mailto:amparks6@gamil.com) **Talk-in:** 146.82 (-) (156.7 PL) Admission Free

More hamfests listed at [www.arrl.org/hamfests](http://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

Well, Field Day has come and gone. It was HOT! But propagation was good and many contacts were made. I want to personally and sincerely thank our Vice-President Hunter, W3CZ, for the excellent job he did as Field Day chairman. There were some problems, but Hunter's planning was superb and his introduction to many of our club members on the use of the ICS forms was done very well. In the event of a "real thing" we would need to be able to find information contained on those forms and this was an excellent exercise.

KCARC had a good score this year thanks to the efforts of Jon, AA1K, and Eric, WG3j, whose combined CW contacts were 978. This year we ended with 826 phone contacts, a big increase over the past few years. KCARC got 1814 contacts this year, a big increase over the 850 contacts we ended up with last year. Again, thank you Jon and Eric!

We filled in a couple successes, as we were visited by local elected officials and representatives of our served agency. We also identified a potential problem with the county's generator, before it could be a problem in a real emergency. The last being a most important success.

But we had a few failures also. Plans did not exactly work out as written up and for the second year we didn't get our NTS messages out nor make a satellite contact. Those pesky birds high above are sometimes hard to get! But, as one old wise man said, when you try and fail, it is a learning experience, just don't make the same mistake again!

If my health issues do not improve, this may be my last Field Day. I have always enjoyed Field Day ever since I was introduced to it in 1992 and have seen it improve over the years, both with the local operation and the rules given by the ARRL. Both Summer and Winter Field Days have their purpose and help evaluate the preparedness of the organizations, and gives time to correct and improve on operations. There will be more in the coming months on these important activities.

## President's Column

I periodically use Winlink to pass email. I originally tested it as a means to communicate with my daughter in Las Vegas while we were traveling in our motorhome and out of the range of cell phone service. I used HF frequencies and honestly my results were mixed. Sometimes I could check into a node right away, sometimes I would need a dozen attempts, and then there were times when I just gave up trying. Adding to the pain was the 300 baud character rate limit on HF. Several years passed and then I did a little research on Packet Radio and thought I would check it out. I was never able to successfully link up with a pure packet station but I did discover a Winlink packet node in New Jersey that I could rapidly and reliably use to transmit Winlink messages at 1200 baud.

The nuts and bolts: The Winlink node station is KC2TXB-10 at 145.070 MHz and it is listed on the Packet Radio Map. I have a dedicated Yaesu FT-2900 transceiver using a Digirig interface and UZ7HO Soundmodem software. As the transceiver doesn't support CAT control I leave it tuned to the proper frequency. The Digirig USB driver is down-loadable from their web site. If you are using Windows 10 you will have to give the microphone "permission" to communicate, a detail I spent a couple of hours figuring out. I set up the Yaesu FTM-400XDR/DE in the communication trailer to have the same capability to pass field day radiograms using the club laptop #1. Just another tool in the tool box.

Jim KC3BTV  
President KCARC

## Vice-President's Column

While preparing for the ARRL field day, I learned a lot. From aspects on what radios perform best in what areas all the way to where what antenna is best for each mode. In private, outside of the public view, I've worked to obtain the permits, inviting public officials, and planning every detail in extreme detail.

When I originally was given the position for Field Day coordinator I was thinking it would be easy, "It can't be any harder than ordering lunch and setting up for POTA, can it?" Oh boy was I wrong. Next year's field day chairman should know a few things before they step up:

- It's a big event even though it may not seem like it.
- Don't get tripped up on the little things that go wrong.
- There is always going to be another opinion for what you chose to do.

That's at least what I gathered from doing this and can honestly say.

Now, I'd like to spend some time thanking some individuals for their commendable efforts in helping with the events planning and execution; Bob Speakman Jr., Diane Acker, and Paul Johnston for helping organize the invites to public officials, TV and Commercial Radio advertisements for Field Day and getting the club set up with a future partnership including youth involvement. Jimmy Maloney for helping organize the events computer, internet, and technology infrastructure. There are more thank yous and awards to be handed out, but I'll save that for the upcoming meeting.

Amateur Radio isn't a hobby, but an umbrella term of a collection of many different hobbies. Field Day this year was Kent County's time to shine, demonstrating every facet of what Ham Radio is. We pulled together contesters, CW machines, rag-chewers, and even people who don't even get on the air at all, just to show the public what we do when all else fails.

73,  
Hunter Grier - W3CZ  
KCARC Vice President

## From the Section Manager's Shack

Greetings from Sussex County

As I write this newsletter in the comfort of my air conditioning, I think back to just a few days ago I was visiting Field Day sites in both Sussex and Kent Counties where the temps were in the mid to high 90's. I camped at Trap Pond State Park enabling me to visit the nearby FD sites as well as work POTA from the park.

### Field Day 2024

Another ARRL Field Day is in the books! Field Day, the premier amateur radio event of the year, did not disappoint. I visited several sites and encountered a wide variety of setups. Some had GOTA stations, one was operated mainly within an EOC, and another was fully set up in a park with several command-type vehicles used by radio operators. The air conditioning in the vehicles made operating pleasant and safer. The social aspect of these events is a major draw. While not everyone is passionate about operating, everyone enjoys socializing with other operators. The food and camaraderie are often the highlights of the event.

### ARRL Service Disruption

The ARRL is still in the process of bringing their network back online. Some of the .org email addresses and other functions are still down. If you need to speak with anyone from the ARRL HQ I would suggest calling 1-860-594-0200 or 1-888-277-5289 (toll-free in the US), Monday through Thursday from 8 AM to 7 PM Eastern Time, and until 5 PM on Fridays. LOTW data are secure and are now becoming intermittently usable.

### Club Grant Program

A new ARRL Foundation Club Grants program, funded by a grant from the Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC), will make \$500,000 available to radio clubs. The program will provide up to \$25,000 for worthy club projects. The projects will need to be "transformative" in nature. Visit the ARRL page and search "Club Grant Program" for more information.

### Club Commission Program

The ARRL Club Commission Program is a club benefit program that provides benefits to your club when your club members become new ARRL Members or renew their existing ARRL Membership. Each new ARRL Standard membership earns the club \$20 commission. Renewals the club \$5 each. There is no limit what a club can earn. Visit the main ARRL page and search "Club Commission Program" for details along with documents and guidelines.

### Legislative Update: Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act (AREPA)

AREPA is moving forward. Section Staff have been able to secure several hundred letters but we need more. Passing the word to all licensees will allow us to have the strongest voice possible with our legislators. Contact your county Emergency Coordinator or other section staff for blank copies of the letters. Contact me directly at [kc3dso@gmail.com](mailto:kc3dso@gmail.com) to get copies.

### Upcoming Events

13 Colonies Special Event - July 1- 7, 2024.

This event allows amateur radio operators around the globe to learn about the original 13 Colonies and the city where independence began. This will be the event's 5th year. Delaware radio operators can represent Delaware running as K2E. This is a fun event where you can hunt all 13 Colonies and the 2 Bonus station, run as K2E or both. If you work a station please spot the station. It's suggested DX Summit is used per the 13 Colonies website. You don't need all 13 Colonies stations to get the beautiful certificate nor do you need the 2 bonus stations for a clean sweep. If you are interested in running as

K2E contact Gene, NY3C, ny3c@arrl.net. The 13 Colonies event page can be found at 13colonies.us.

IARU HF World Championship – July 13-14, 2024

In this event you contact as many other amateurs, especially IARU member society HQ stations, around the world as possible using the 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meter bands. Visit [contests.arrl.org](https://contests.arrl.org) for details.

### **A Warm Welcome to Our Newest & Upgrading Members;**

Join me in welcoming the latest additions to our vibrant community:

KC3ZGC	MacKenzie, Steven
KC3ZIK	Visalli, Anthony J
KC3ZIW	Hallenbeck, David P
KC3ZIY	Labosky, Jessica

### **Let's Stay Engaged & Challenged**

The future of ham radio will rest on bringing in more young members. Too many hams apparently are losing interest as they get older, being nostalgic for what ham radio was when many of us started out several decades ago. The future always rests on motivating young people to become active. Field Day operations from your homes have limited the opportunities for the public to see passionate ham operators putting up temporary antennas and operating at parks and other public places using generators or solar power. With an average age of hams now at 75, what will ham radio look like in ten years? How many of today's hams will have lost interest in ham radio a decade from now? How many of today's hams will have passed away in ten years? We need to do more. Much more. Some ham clubs and groups in Delaware go out of their way to publicize upcoming license exams but more efforts are needed by clubs to offer radio classes prior to offering license exams. What is your club doing to reach out to the public schools to get kids interested in radio and electronics? Kids are likely to be less interested in contesting than many of our older members but the youngsters seem to be interested in satellites, radio direction finding and simple construction projects like a tape measure direction finding antenna. Ham radios future rests with you.

73,

Steven Keller

Delaware Section Manager

Email: [kc3dso@gmail.com](mailto:kc3dso@gmail.com)

Cell: 240.515.0620

Office: 302.604.7470

ARRL Delaware Section Reflector (<https://groups.io/g/ARRLDelawareSection>)

ARRL Sections – Delaware (<https://arrl.org/sections/view/delaware>)

### **The Emcomm Corner**

Hurricane season is upon us. NOAA is predicting an 85% chance of an above normal season, predicting a range of 17 to 25 named storms. Thanks to Cape Hatteras, most storms miss us and go to sea or further North. Notice I said, "Most". We in Delaware still have the potential for storm damage.

Your first priority is making sure you and your family are both safe and provided for in terms of shelter and food. Make sure you have needed non-perishable supplies, water, and medications on hand prior to a storm's approach. Once a storm is on the horizon you will be competing with thousands of others for limited stock. Do not plan on depending on electricity for cooking or cooling because power losses can last for days.

From a ham radio perspective, in the event of a major storm, your input can provide valuable front line information via Skywarn nets. Of course, in order to participate you need reliable backup power using a generator, batteries, solar, or some combination thereof. Test out your backup systems before the need arises. Backup systems should include antennas as well as power.

If your family is taken care of, you may be available, if called upon, to help with backup communications for Kent County Department of Public Safety. In order to do that you must have the required training and be familiar with the equipment you may be called upon to use. The middle of an emergency is not the time to learn to format an ICS-213 or change bands on a radio.

We need to plan for the worst and hope for the best.

73,  
Jim KC3BTV  
Kent County EC

## **AUXCOMM News**

Another Field Day in the books and more lessons learned. Murphy has a way of coming up with a learning curriculum, regardless of your best laid plans. That's why we have Field Day, exercises, drills, and other activities, to prepare us to do what may be expected of us to do, "when all else fails". There's nothing like a failure to get you scrambling to make something work. With the first operators showing up Saturday morning, it was hit the switch and get them used to the radios they were going to use. Murphy ordained the primary HF position in the AUXCOMM Room at the Sussex EOC wasn't going to turn on today. There's that sinking feeling as you punch the power switch multiple times with no response. Unfortunately the primary HF position is remoted and a good quarter mile to the east at the County Records Center, formerly the "old EOC" with the tall towers. We don't have non-emergency access except during normal weekday business hours. So there was now an opportunity for getting to know another HF position and radio for some lucky operators. It was later that it was determined that the IT department had changed a switch in the Records Center and didn't configure the ports correctly.

Saturday was also the first roll out of the AUXCOMM / CERT trailer that had been undergoing renovation over the last several months. It's still a "work in progress". When AUXCOMM and Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) were combined under one administrative structure, along with that came a 24 foot trailer that was basically used for storage. It is being configured to support both AUXCOMM and Community CERT Teams. For AUXCOMM, it is a portable communication asset, with HF through UHF on the amateur bands, and county 800 MHz and UHF. We are following our standard of "flexibility and redundancy" in setting up the communications. For CERT it can respond to a community team that has been activated for an emergency, where it will operate as a command post (CP) and a supply cache. AUXCOMM personnel can respond to manage scene to EOC communications and assist with the CERT communications on county UHF. There were many positive comments from the visitors at Field day THAT VIEWED THE UNIT. There is still work to be completed that will hopefully be accomplished in the next month.

If Field Day is preparation for the "real thing"; if Field Day is for socializing; if Field Day is learning new things, then I believe we had a successful Field Day. It also was an opportunity for AUXCOMM and CERT personnel to learn something about what the other group does. Interestingly we have AUXCOMM members that are interested in CERT, and CERT members that are interested in learning more about Ham Radio. There are currently five members of the Management Team that hold some type of CERT certification.

If you've been following the news, you are aware that Joe Thomas, long time director of the EOC, retired at the end of March. There has followed a reorganization of the upper management of the three primary public safety divisions that now reside in what is still called the EOC, but the "C" now stands for "Complex". So it is the Emergency Operations Complex, housing Paramedics, 911 Response, and Emergency Management. The last slot to be filled will be July 1, when Tim Cooper takes over as the Deputy Director of Public Safety – Emergency Management. That's the division that AUXCOMM and CERT fall under.

Later, 73  
John K3PFW

## Club Happenings

### The New Amateur Extra-class Question Pool

The New Amateur Extra-class Question Pool has been released and will be effective beginning July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2028. The 2024 - 2028 pool is available as a Microsoft Word document and as a PDF. The 10 graphics required for the new Extra-class question pool are available within the documents or separately in PDF and JPG file formats.

ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (VEC) Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM, and member of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (NCVEC) Question Pool Committee (QPC), said, "The new pool incorporates significant changes compared to the 2020 - 2024 version. We carefully went over the pool for technical accuracy, relevance to today's amateur radio practices, syntax, grammar, style, format, and clarity and redundancy within and between the pools. With these goals in mind, 82 new questions were created, and 101 questions were eliminated, resulting in a reduction [of] the number of questions from 622 to 603. Over 350 questions were modified. We considered a question modified when the knowledge being tested was not changed but wording was improved, or answers or distractors were replaced."

Somma advised that "the newly revised pool must be used for Extra-class license exams starting July 1, 2024. New test designs will be available to ARRL Volunteer Examiners (VEs) on that date. The ARRL VEC will supply its officially appointed, field-stocked VE teams with new Extra-class exam booklet designs around mid-June."

Thanks to the ARRL Letter

### Field Day is Over

To some this event is a contest, to some a picnic, and to some an emergency exercise. But what is the true meaning of Field Day? To "National Today" Field Day provides two main purposes; "The contest portion of Field Day has two purposes: The primary purpose is to test the group's ability to plan operations that can be effective for an entire twenty-four-hour period, including operator endurance and adequate numbers of operators for a shift operation. The secondary purpose is to demonstrate the technical proficiency of the station that has been quickly constructed for the contacts: In theory, a better station will be capable of emergency operations in dire conditions; such a station will also be capable of making more contacts during the contest portion of Field Day. Point systems are structured to motivate emergency preparedness activities, such as designating a safety officer for the station or incorporating auxiliary power capabilities and passing messages."

Bet you all didn't know how much you were doing to demonstrate what would be such an important operation in the case of a real emergency? But then again, the food was great!

## **Plan On Attending A Fireworks Presentation?**

If you plan on attending any of the Sussex county fireworks activities, Sussex AUXCOMM suggests you bring your HT with you. There will be no formal nets, however AUXCOMM personnel are planning on monitoring 144.915 simplex. If you see something off, give them a call.

## **Hurricane Beryl**

In the The emcomm Corner, Jim states that the forecast is for 17 to 25 named storms this year. The National Weather Service forecasters predict eight to 13 of those becoming hurricanes, including four to seven major hurricanes.

Well, looks like the first major hurricane of the season is about to happen. As of this writing on Sunday at noon, Beryl has become a category 3 with strengthening forecast to a "dangerous category 4" by Monday. Doesn't look like Delmarva will be affected by Beryl at this time, but Jim's timely piece may be coming true.

## **Useless Facts of 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. (E.T. Calling home??!!)

Sideburns are named after American Civil War General, General Burnside. (And he had some!!!)

June 30, 1908

An asteroid exploded above Tunguska in Siberia, leaving 800 square miles of scorched or blown-down trees. (Talk about urban clearing!)

In Oklahoma, it's illegal to take a bite out of another person's hamburger. (As it should be!!)

In France, you can legally marry a dead person. (And at least one person did!!!)

Mount Rushmore, one of America's most iconic landmarks, is named after Charles E. Rushmore, a prominent New York lawyer. During an expedition to the Black Hills in 1885, Charles Rushmore inquired about the name of the prominent granite mountain. His guide responded, "Never had a name, but from now on we'll call it Rushmore." The name stuck and locals began calling the granite outcrop Mount Rushmore. Today, Mount Rushmore is famous for the colossal carvings of four U.S. presidents: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln.

The American television series M\*A\*S\*H follows a team of doctors and support staff stationed at the "4077th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital" in Uijeongbu, South Korea, during the Korean War. The series premiered in the U.S. on September 17, 1972, and ended February 28, 1983, with the finale, "Goodbye, Farewell and Amen", becoming the most watched and highest rated single television episode in U.S. television history at the time, with a record-breaking 125 million viewers according to the New York Times.

In 1898, Nikola Tesla astounded a captivated audience at New York City's Madison Square Garden. Using a small remote control, he maneuvered a miniature boat around a pool of water, switching its lights on and off, all without any physical connection to the boat. This demonstration was designed to showcase the potential of radio waves. As one of the pioneers in understanding the technology's applications, Tesla created a remote control that sent radio wave signals to electrical contacts on the boat, which moved the tiny ship's rudder and propeller.



## Tidbit of Information of the Month Department

### Amateur Radio Connects Family Members During Utah Boating Emergency

On June 5, Isaac Stiles, KJ7FAY, and his 3-year-old son were involved in a boating accident. Their canoe had tipped over at the Lost Dog Confluence to the Flaming Gorge Reservoir. The initial emergency call was made by Stiles' wife, Kendal. She had to drive to nearby campsites until she found someone with a phone and then made the call to the Green River Fire Department (GRFD). She told them the pair were in the water but could not be seen or found. Emergency responders rushed to the scene. The fire crews were able to find Stiles and his son on the opposite side of the river. They were rescued by a Sweetwater County Sheriff's Department boat. Stiles' son needed ambulance transportation to a waiting Air Med Helicopter, which would then take him to Primary Children's Hospital in Salt Lake City.

Stiles said that once his son was loaded into the ambulance to meet the helicopter, he needed to call his mother to take care of his other son...but there was no cell phone service. So, he turned on his mobile ham radio to a local repeater and was able to reach Zach Gunyan, KE7WYG. Gunyan made telephone contact with Stiles' mother and relayed critical information. He also went a few steps further and stayed on the phone to help calm and assure Mrs. Stiles that everything was going well. He took the rest of the day off from work, kept monitoring the repeater until Stiles was back in the area, and then went to the scene of the accident to help recover the boat and equipment.

After the telephone conversations with Gunyan, Mrs. Stiles thanked him for his help, to which he replied, "This is why I originally got into ham radio, to help just one person in an emergency." Stiles had a hard time finding the words to thank Gunyan. "He's always been a dependable person and helped in many amateur events," said Stiles. "We are fast becoming good friends!"

Gunyan said he keeps his radio on most of the time, except when he is moving between locations and servicing computer networks. "I lose signal as I move from building to building," said Gunyan. "But on the day of the accident, I just happened to be at the right place, where I could hear the call for help." Stiles' son is now out of the hospital and on track to make a full recovery.

Gunyan is an ARRL member and the current president of the Sweetwater Amateur Radio Club (SARC). He is an Emergency Management volunteer with the Sweetwater County Sheriff's Office. Stiles, secretary of the SARC, is now working on a way to recognize Gunyan for his efforts during the accident.

Thanks to the ARRL Letter

### "My Pocket CW and Digital Station"

I openly admit I love small ham stations. But sometimes, I want all the bells and whistles, spectrum display and more. But sometimes I just want a simple, but well appointed miniature radio and accessories. Enter the QRP-Labs.com " QMX" this 3.5" x 2 3/8" x 1 "transceiver with plenty of bells and whistles in this hybrid transceiver.

Why I say hybrid, it is because QRP-LABS took all the features of their QCX QRP CW transceiver and folded in all the features of their digital QDX digital QRP data radio. So, we ended up with a five band, 5 watt 80-60-40-30-20m transceiver. Or, 20-17-15-12-10m version. It outputs nominally 5 watts on the bands and modes that it is capable of. The test data sheet sent with the radio show 5+ watts on all the bands.

The radio supports QSK, semi-breakin, SWR measurement, digital display, power output, and external battery monitoring. It DOES NOT have an internal battery or antenna transmatch (tuner), or a speaker. But frankly, there isn't room in this small radio. If you want to lower the RF output, you do so by decreasing input DC voltage. I use a small buck-boost DC converter to lower input voltage when

desired. The nominal transmit current is 1 amp. No, the radio does not have a built-in LED flashlight or a siren. Hi-hi!

With appropriate third-party software, it can do FT-8, JS8Call, RTTY and some other single tone digital modes, but not PSK, and the jury is out regarding WINLINK. There are mixed postings here. I tend to believe it can not do WINLINK. But I have been wrong before. Ask my wife!

At 75, and still recovering from my near-death experience last summer; I have not reacquired all my detailed motor skills. So, I was forced to order the radio assembled. Delay was five (5) months. There is still a long delivery cue for assembled-tested radios; but well worth the wait.

Digital transmissions functionality support CAT control and USB audio in and out on a single USB cable. If using an Android tablet (\$40), as I am, you will need an OTG adapter on the tablet's USB port. OTG (On The Go) adapters cost about \$10. Without OTG, the computer-radio link may have problems with CAT control, PTT or USB audio in/out.

There is software for Android (FT8CN) and separately iPhone (iFTX). So, you can go very portable with QMX, battery, 9:1 EFRW antenna with double male BNC barrel, USB cables and tablet or phone. If I want, I can stick all the stations in my two side pants pockets of my jeans excluding the tablet computer. You don't have to go through the long wait for this transceiver. Kits are available via much shorter delivery time. The radio IS NOT impossible to build. But take your time, check everything three times. If you power up the radio and let the "magic smoke" out, it will be up to you to troubleshoot the radio. Repair service is not offered by QRP-LABS at this time. Email support and parts are available via their blog. Here is a short list of some of the features of this pocket radio.

- Versions: 80, 60, 40, 30 and 20m --- or --- 20, 17, 15, 12, 11 and 10m -- or -- 60, 40, 30, 20, 17 and 15m.
- CW and FSK Digi modes
- All features of QCX-mini (VFO A/B/Split, RIT, Message and frequency memories, beacon, keyer, etc)
- 4-5W output at 12V supply (can be built for 4-5W at 9V supply)
- SWR bridge built in
- Single signal digital mode transmission (zero unwanted sideband, zero residual carrier, zero intermodulation distortion)
- Solid-state band switching and transmit/receive switching under CAT control
- Emissions include: CW, digital modes and WSPR beacon. (There is a SSB modification in the works.)

I did add one rig accessory from Tuffeln.com. It is a front panel, and controls, 3D printed protective cover for only \$15. I hold it in-place with a heavy duty rubber band.

If you are looking for a small, well-appointed CW/Digital transceiver; look no further. This is a great fun transceiver. I believe you will not be disappointed. Now I can really carry the radio in my pocket without worries.

Check out the QMX on QRP-LABS.com or videos on YouTube. If you like to do small QRP field activations, with only a power source/battery that can output 12VDC @ 1 amp, the radio and wire antenna, key or digital connections, this may be your radio. I love mine for a multitude of reasons. Small, compact, feature rich, great audio into earbuds, headphones or amplified speaker, no audio howling. Someone asked me what my favorite QRP transceiver is. I said, "the radio I have with me (whatever radio that may be). If it is not with you, then it is of little value to you at that time. Go out an operate-Enjoy!

72,  
Paul Beeman, W2PB

## Update: Massachusetts Police, Fire Report Statewide 911 Outage

June 18, 2024 Rick Sobey, Boston Herald

(TNS) — The 911 emergency system was back up and running across the Bay State Tuesday afternoon, according to local police and fire departments. 911 was down for about two hours.

“911 Operating System is back up and running,” Boston Police posted at 3:42 p.m. The Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security said the State 911 Department had been aware of “a disruption to the 911 system and is investigating the cause.”

“UPDATE: The Massachusetts 911 system has been restored,” the state agency posted at 3:43 p.m. “The public may now resume calling 911 for emergencies. Thank you for your patience + cooperation. The State 911 Department continues to investigate the cause of the disruption.”

### Previous version of story

Agencies starting letting the public know about the outage at around 1:45 p.m. Tuesday. “The current 911 system is down statewide,” Boston Fire posted. “... if you have an emergency and need assistance pull your nearest Fire Box, or call the Boston Fire Department at 617-343-2880. “You can also get assistance by going to your nearest Firehouse,” the fire department wrote. Boston Firefighters Local 718 IAFF added, “While this incident is concerning and stressful to many, fortunately in Boston we proudly maintain the first in the nation telegraph fire dispatch system. This system has withstood the test of time and emergency since 1852 and incidents such as today underscore its resiliency and necessity.”

Boston Police told residents who need help to call their local police district station. “ Boston Police will be patrolling with their blue lights activated for high visibility,” BPD posted. Other police and fire departments across the region were also letting residents know of the outage. “We have been made aware that there is an issue affecting the 911 system statewide,” Wilmington Police posted. “If you need to contact us, please call our business line at 978-658-5071 and press option 1 to be connected to our Dispatch Center.”

Thanks to Government Technology online

## Delaware Firefighters Find Partner to Help Recruit Volunteers

June 07, 2024 Jim McKay

The Delaware Volunteer Firefighters Association (DVFA) has almost 3,400 volunteers but says it needs about 600 more. To get the word out on the opportunities that await young people who would like to become volunteers, like free training, DVFA partnered with **First Arriving**, a start-up that offers marketing and recruitment services to first responders. “First Arriving tackles the problem really by offering comprehensive recruitment services that are tailored individually to the unique needs of our clients, using the latest tools and targeted strategies to attract and retain talent,” said Shannon Gilliland, First Arriving CEO. The partnership with Delaware is less than two years old and the contract is for four years.

The strategy in Delaware so far includes running ads on Facebook and Instagram, doing Google search ads, using the sides of buses as mobile billboards for ads and, coming to Delaware theaters soon, videos on the topic of being a firefighter to go along with previews before a movie starts. And the key, according to Kristina Greene, assistant director of recruitment marketing for First Arrival, is having a website where people can find all the information they would need to learn about what’s involved and where to go. “JoinDelawarefire.com has all the profiles about the departments,” Greene said, “so if you’re interested in volunteering or just more information, you’re able to connect with every single department across the state.”

The DVFA used a FEMA grant to bring First Arriving on board, even though they have had a pretty robust recruitment arm in the works. “I think [First Arriving] has put together a pretty good marketing strategy to reach out, between social media and some other means of advertisement,” said Tom DiCristofaro, vice president of DVFA and president of Claymont Fire Company, an all-volunteer fire department in northern Delaware. “I have a pretty active recruitment and retention committee here at my station, so we haven’t had to lean on them too much currently.”

DiCristofaro said it can be hard to compete with the other interests of teens these days and ask them to volunteer when there are so many other opportunities and things to do for young people. “Take a 16-year-old kid — that’s the earliest age they can come in. You really don’t have a lot to offer them and ... we’re fighting video games, we’re fighting the lack of just people wanting to volunteer,” DiCristofaro said. DiCristofaro said his pitch has to be that the kid will be trained to be the best and that they won’t get much out of it but self-satisfaction. That’s a tough sell when the volunteer is sacrificing their time and possibly their life. DiCristofaro, a 50-year veteran of the fire service, said times have changed, making it harder for people to volunteer their services.

“We used to have a lot of shift workers; we used to have a lot of guys that only worked one job and the wife stayed home,” he said. “Nowadays, some of the guys are working two jobs, the wives are working and someone has to watch the kids. The whole cycle has changed drastically.”

Thanks to Government Technology online

## **FEMA Warns It Could Run Out of Cash This Hurricane Season**

June 04, 2024

Alex Harris, Miami Herald

(TNS) - With a grim storm forecast ahead, the nation’s top disaster responders are in danger of running out of cash at the peak of hurricane season— again.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Disaster Relief Fund is on pace to run dry by August. Without congressional action, that could leave Florida and other states staring at massive expenses and slower recovery efforts if a major storm hits. The chances for that are high ahead of what is predicted to be the busiest season on record.

At a press conference at the National Hurricane Center last week, FEMA Deputy Administrator Erik Hooks said the agency would switch to prioritizing “life-saving, life-sustaining work” if funding dwindles. That could leave important programs like individual financial aid or reimbursements for governments cleaning up storm debris on the chopping block. By September, the agency that leads disaster response across the country projects it could be nearly \$7 billion short.

“It’s something that we’re concerned about because we want to make sure we have all of our programs up and running at full strength,” he said. “We have not faced an issue where we have not been able to provide services, We don’t even want to bump up close to that possibility.”

Florida Sens. Rick Scott and Marco Rubio, both Republicans, wrote a letter to FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell highlighting the issue last month, where they called the potential funding shortage “unacceptable.”

“We cannot stress enough how devastating this funding shortage would be to hurricane and disaster relief efforts in Florida and across the country,” they wrote.

In a May report, FEMA said it would exhaust its funds in August, with a shortfall of \$1.3 billion dollars that is projected to grow to \$6.8 billion by September.

The senators also noted a feeling of deja vu. Last year, the exact same situation played out.

In August 2023, FEMA's cash stockpile for disaster response ran out, right as Hurricane Idalia swept through the Florida Big Bend as a Category 4 hurricane. It caused \$3.6 billion in damages throughout Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas.

At the same time, the agency was also juggling its response to the devastating wildfires in Maui, Hawaii.

With no money left in its disaster fund, FEMA was forced to abruptly halt thousands of ongoing recovery projects in states trying to pick up the pieces from previous disasters in order to prioritize funding for Hawaiians and Floridians. This was the ninth time FEMA had to triage its disaster funding since 2001, Politico reported.

This could make 10, unless Congress votes to give FEMA additional money for the fund.

Congressman Jared Moskowitz, a Broward Democrat, told the Miami Herald that he and Florida's senators plan to quickly file bills addressing the shortfall once Congress resumes meeting in September. He urged his fellow lawmakers to take politics out of the equation.

"These are nonpartisan disasters that hit. They don't hit Democrats or Republicans, they hit Americans, they hit an entire community," he said. "We cannot start trying to balance the budget off their disaster. If we want to balance the budget we need to do it holistically."

©2024 Miami Herald. Visit [miamiherald.com](http://miamiherald.com). Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Thanks to Government Technology online

## **Joke of the Month**

### **The Magician**

A magician was working on a cruise ship in the Caribbean. The audience would be different each week, so the magician allowed himself to do the same tricks over and over again.

There was only one problem: The captain's parrot saw the shows every week and began to understand what the magician did in every trick. Once he understood that, he started shouting in the middle of the show.

"Look, it's not the same hat!" "Look, he's hiding the flowers under the table!" "Hey, why are all the cards the Ace of Spades?"

The magician was furious but couldn't do anything, it was the captain's parrot after all.

One day the ship had an accident and sank. The magician found himself on a piece of wood, in the middle of the ocean, and of course the parrot was by his side.

They stared at each other with hate, but did not utter a word. This went on for several days.

After a week the parrot finally said, "Okay, I give up. What'd you do with the boat?"

## **Quote of the Month**

"The older I get, the better I used to be."  
Lee Trevino