

From the Section Manager's Shack

Greetings from Sussex County

As we welcome a new year, many of us are setting goals and building better habits. I for one have a few New Year's resolutions. Many of us set goals for walking a bit more, getting a few overdue household chores done, etc. I am clearly not the best with New Year's resolutions as I am just now trying to finish one from this year; activate all of the Delaware POTA parks. As of this writing I am just three away so I may get this resolution done before 2025.

How many of us got new radios for Christmas? I picked up a used IC-7300 which I hope to get on the air shortly. The IC-7300 has a unique feature making it a nice rig for EmComm. The IC-7300 has the ability to use the Vara high speed HF protocol in what is called "Vara HF Tactical" mode. This is done by opening up the TX filter to allow the 2750 bandwidth. A nice jump from the 'fast' 2300. Need help with your new rig? Visit the ARRL Delaware Section website and see our current list of Mentors to get help. Visit ARRL Sections - Delaware or send me an email.

The 2025 DELMARVA Electronics Expo and Delaware State Convention has been moved to Saturday, April 26, 2025. The location remains the same at the Cheer Center, 20520 Sand Hill Road, Georgetown, DE 19947. At 6am the parking lot gate opens. This year's schedule will include two exciting presentations. First is entitled "Starlink for EmComm" and "Lessons Learned from Hurricane Helene deployment." Visit www.radioelectronicsexpo.com for details.

Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act (AREPA) HOA Bill update;
Upon speaking with our Atlantic Division Director and the ARRL's Legislative Chair, AREPA is moving forward and has received a few new sponsors. Initially as Section Manager I was to assist the division staff and deliver the hundreds of signed letters directly to our state legislators in DC but this changed. It was decided I would scan all of our letters and forward them to the Legislative Chair for organization and delivery in DC. As of December 21, I have sent all of the letters electronically. I am still accepting new letters so if you or any other amateur radio licensee wants to complete a set of letters let me know.

DXCC Update from the ARRL;

I reported a couple of months ago that the ARRL DXCC System has been returned to service. Since then, over 3,000 DXCC applications have been logged into the DXCC System for processing. This queue is very large and has included nearly 6 months of applications. ARRL Awards staff and additional staff volunteers have been working extended hours and weekends to process the applications. DXCC is the ARRL's most popular award. DXCC applications enter the DXCC System from one of three sources: From DXCC applications created by users in the Logbook of the World (LoTW), from traditional paper applications and from Online DXCC applications. The easiest way to determine if your DXCC application has been processed is to review your LoTW account. From the Award Account menu, select Account Status. The "Awarded" column will reflect those QSO's that have been awarded to you after your application(s) have been fully processed. Visit the ARRL's DXCC Resource page by visiting www.arrl.org/dxcc for more information.

Delaware Section Club Grant Application Update;

In July I applied for a grant through the ARRL Club Grants Program. The ARRL Club Grants program allows clubs to apply for a grant for many reasons including education, youth engagement, etc. As the grant was for clubs, I applied as both Section Manager and as Vice President of the Nanticoke Amateur Radio Club. When I applied for the grant, I applied requesting \$25,000 for implement/upgrade our emergency digital messaging infrastructure in the section. I knew this was a long shot but wanted to try. I was notified by email on December 2 the grant was not approved. I will reapply again on a future grant cycle changing some of the information in the application.

Winter Field Day is January 25th & 26th;

2025 Winter Field Day weekend is approaching fast. This is a great opportunity for radio operators to set up field operations in remote locations, enabling them to connect with other stations worldwide. WFD is one of my favorite events of the year as I get to combine my two favorite hobbies; camping and amateur radio. The unique conditions presented during winter radio operations presents challenges that keep up sharp. Be sure to list your station on the Winter Field Day site so everyone knows you will be on the air. Visit winterfieldday.org for more information and to register your WFD site.

ARRL Affiliated Club Annual Updates;

The ARRL requires each Affiliated club to update the league with changes to their club. These changes can include new officers, contact person, phone contact, etc. The best time to do these updates is now; after the election of new officers. To update your clubs' records with the ARRL visit www.arrl.org/club-update. The authorized club person performing the update must be an ARRL member with a valid login to the main page. Upon entering the club-update page click "updated your club information" link at the bottom of the page. Instructions are provided at this link which will walk you through the update process. The section does not have an Affiliated Club Coordinator (interested?) so as Section Manager I assume this role. If you need assistance let me know.

February's Newsletter will start a mini-series of articles on the ARRL;

I often get questions from both new and seasoned ARRL members not only about the ARRL and about me. Questions run the gamut; such as who runs the ARRL? What is your job as Section Manager? What division are we in and who runs it? How is the ARRL structured? I think it's time I do several small paragraphs over several months explaining these and many other questions. Should you have any questions you would like addressed, drop me a note.

Upcoming Events & Contests

- Kids Day – First Saturday in January (and Third Saturday in June) Twice a year, ARRL offers an event designed to promote Amateur Radio to our youth. Kids Day is designed to give on-the-air experience to young people and hopefully foster interest in getting a license of their own. It is also intended to give older hams a chance to share their station and love for Amateur Radio with their children. Visit www.arrl.org/kids-day for more information.
- RTTY RoundUp – January 4-5, 2025. In this contest amateurs worldwide contact and exchange QSO information with other amateurs using only the Radioteletype (RTTY) mode on the 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meter bands. Any station may work another station. Visit www.arrl.org/rtty-roundup for more details and rules.
- January VHF Contest – January 18-20, 2025. Amateurs in the US and Canada (and their possessions) work as many amateur stations in as many different 2 degree x 1 degree Maidenhead grid squares as possible using frequencies over 50 MHz. Visit www.arrl.org/january-vhf for more details and rules.
- Winter Field Day – Winter Field Day (WFD) is just around the corner. Winter Field Day is the last full weekend in January. This year's event is on January 25 & 26, 2025. Winter Field Day is an annual event for amateur radio operators to set up field operations in remote locations, enabling them to connect with other participants worldwide. WFD aims to help participants improve their preparedness for disasters and enhance their operational abilities in adverse conditions. Setup alone or with a group or club. Setup in a POTA Park and get double duty out of the day. Or reserve a campsite for an overnighiter. Remember to register to get on the map. To register or get more info visit www.winterfieldday.org. Visit contests.arrl.org or www.contestcalendar.com for details on these and upcoming contests.

A Warm Welcome to Our Newest & Upgrading Members – Callsigns now into the KD3 prefix.

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

- Donald A. Kuczenski, KB3LVX
- Ronald Wisneski, KC3AAC
- Matthew Jarvis, KC3CRJ
- Raymond J. Cichocki, KC3EDK
- John Searl, KC3EIB
- Thomas Hurley, KC3ELK
- Andrew Hensler, KD3AFR
- Tyler G. Foresta, KD3AGW
- Josh Farrell, KD3AHL
- James Perry, KD3AHN
- Barbara Vodvarka, KD3AHQ
- Robert Varipapa, KD3AHY

Get On the Air with HF!

If you are reading my newsletter then you are most likely already licensed. Getting your license starts with passing and getting your Technician class license. Many Techs don't upgrade to HF privilege's (General or Extra) but you are missing a world of entertainment. It's time to get into the worldwide adventure of HF. Setting up a HF station is a bit more involved than your basic VHF/UHF station. This can seem overwhelming but help is available. You will need help making decisions on a transceiver, antenna system, transmission line, etc. Local clubs are your first step. Get to a meeting and start asking questions. Each club has operators that specialize in HF stations whether it be digital or phone (voice). The ARRL Delaware Section has a nice list of mentors in each county with several specializing in HF. Once you get your General license you have access to many additional bands for worldwide QSO's. This license jump will allow you full access for contesting; one of the most enjoyable aspects of HF.

Hope to hear you on the air!

73,

Steven Keller

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