

ARRL Delaware Section Manager Newsletter – August 2026

Greetings from Sussex County

Welcome to another edition of the ARRL Delaware Section newsletter!

We're glad you've joined us as we share the latest news, upcoming events, training opportunities, operating activities, legislative developments, and the many accomplishments of amateur radio operators across the First State. Every day, Delaware hams demonstrate the spirit of service, technical innovation, and community involvement that makes our Amateur Radio Service so valuable. Thank you for your continued dedication, and for everything you do to support amateur radio and proudly represent the Delaware Section.

ARRL Delaware Section Welcomes New Section Emergency Coordinator

The ARRL Delaware Section is pleased to announce the appointment of Jerry Simonowits, KB2GCG, as the new Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC), effective immediately. Jerry has been a licensed Amateur Radio operator for more than 35 years and resides in Newark, Delaware. He brings a wealth of emergency communications experience to the position through his long-standing involvement with New Castle County ARES® and Christiana ARES (CARES). An active HF operator, Jerry enjoys Parks on the Air (POTA), contesting, and digital modes such as FT8. His extensive operating experience and technical knowledge will be valuable assets as he leads and supports emergency communications efforts throughout the Delaware Section.

In addition to his local emergency communications work, Jerry serves as a Mentor and Net Control Station for the Hurricane Watch Net, helping train operators and support hurricane-related communications.

Please join me in welcoming Jerry to the Delaware Section leadership team. I look forward to working with him as we continue to strengthen our emergency communications capabilities, support our ARES® volunteers, and build partnerships with our served agencies across the First State.

Jerry's appointment is effective immediately. He can be reached at kb2gcg at [gmail.com](mailto:kb2gcg@gmail.com). Congratulations, Jerry, and thank you for stepping forward to serve the Amateur Radio community in Delaware! The Delaware Section still has two positions open on staff. An Affiliated Club Coordinator and Assistant Section Manager. If interested, look up the position descriptions on the ARRL website.

Delaware HOA Bill is moving forward

With the dedicated efforts of Pat, KW3Z, our State Government Liaison, and Tim, KC3OO, a Delaware version of the federal Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act has been drafted and tailored to meet the needs of our state. The Delaware Section Staff is now working to have this legislation introduced during the next session of the Delaware General Assembly. If enacted, this legislation would require homeowners' associations to provide reasonable accommodation for amateur radio antennas, helping licensed operators maintain the communications capabilities that serve their families, neighbors, and communities during emergencies.

As this effort moves forward, I will once again be asking for the support of every amateur radio operator in Delaware. Whether it's signing letters at club meetings, responding to an email campaign, or contacting your elected representatives, your participation will be essential. Grassroots advocacy has the greatest impact when

legislators hear directly from the citizens they represent.

While the ARRL continues to advocate for similar legislation at the federal level, we also have an opportunity to make meaningful progress here in Delaware. With nearly 1,830 licensed amateur radio operators across our state, our collective voice can make a real difference. Together, we can help ensure that amateur radio operators are able to continue serving their communities when reliable communications are needed most.

Call for Nominations for ARRL Director and Vice Director

ATTENTION Full ARRL members in the ATLANTIC, DAKOTA, DELTA, GREAT LAKES, and MIDWEST Divisions, you have the opportunity to choose your Division Director and Vice Director for 3-year terms on the ARRL Board of Directors beginning January 1, 2027. A voting Director is chosen by ballot by the full (licensed) ARRL members. Vice Directors, who serve in the absence of the Director at a Board meeting and succeed to the position of Director should a vacancy occur, are chosen at the same time. Elections are held in five divisions per year. Please see ARRL News (7/1/2026 - https://www.arrl.org/news/call-for-nominations-for-arrrl-director-and-vice-director-3?tm_source=Informz&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=ARRL&zs=ANgkm&zl=dNQq3) for a recent story about the qualifications and eligibility of nominees, the nomination procedure, balloting, and a list of incumbent Directors and Vice Directors in the five divisions in which elections will be held this year.

Balloting

Official voting documents and instructions will be postal-mailed to members who are eligible to vote no later than October 19, 2026. For those with valid email addresses on file with ARRL, a follow-up email will be sent on October 26, 2026. Votes must be electronically cast by noon Eastern Time on Friday, November 20, 2026. The candidate receiving the most votes will be declared the winner that day.

Review Your Email Address

Members are encouraged to have a valid email address on file with ARRL to receive follow-up email and reminders to vote. Visit www.arrl.org/myARRL to review your ARRL account and contact Information (you must be logged in to the ARRL website to access your account). If you have multiple email addresses, ARRL will use the address marked "Main." For assistance reviewing or updating your email address, please telephone Member Services at (860) 594-0200 during business hours.

ARRL EmComm Courses Online

Whether you're new to emergency communications or looking to expand your skills, the ARRL Learning Center offers a series of online Emergency Communications

(EmComm) courses designed to help you become a more effective volunteer. Each course builds on the previous one, providing a progressive path for developing the knowledge and skills needed to support served agencies and your community during emergencies.

The ARRL currently offers two online courses:

Basic EmComm – An excellent starting point that introduces the fundamentals of emergency communications, volunteer responsibilities, and the essential tools and procedures every EmComm operator should understand.

Intermediate EmComm – Builds upon the basic course with more advanced topics, providing greater insight into emergency communications operations, planning, and working effectively within the Incident Command System (ICS) and alongside served agencies.

The third course in the series, ***Advanced EmComm***, is currently on indefinite hold while the ARRL updates the curriculum to reflect today's emergency communications environment and best practices. You can access these courses through the ARRL Learning Center under the Emergency Communications Training section. Please note that the ARRL Learning Center requires its own login, which is separate from your primary ARRL website account. If you haven't created a Learning Center account yet, it's a quick one-time process that will give you access to these valuable training resources.

Whether you plan to support ARES, assist your local community, or simply become a more capable radio operator, these courses are an excellent investment in your amateur radio education and preparedness.

Mandatory ARRL Affiliated Club Updates

The ARRL has announced it will be dropping affiliated clubs from the affiliated club active roster if you fail to update your clubs listing. Although the ARRL mentions the updating of your club stats every two years, this should be an annual event for every club after your annual elections. This provides the league full access to a club contact and officers. The ARRL does not remove clubs from affiliated status as they are perpetual but they do move them to an inactive list which can affect if new prospective members can find you.

A club's information can only be updated by those listed as Contact or Officers on the ARRL website and you must be logged in to edit. Visit www.arrl.org/club-update to ensure your clubs data is correct.

ARRL Membership Commission Program for Affiliated Clubs Update!

The ARRL Board of Directors at their second meeting of the year heard new motions. One of the motions was to increase the club commission amount and to make it easier for clubs to receive credit. A new online membership form will be created to allow both new and renewing members to select a participating club to receive credit for their ARRL membership. This motion was passed and the motion increases the Club Commission to ARRL membership renewals from \$5 to \$10.

Grid Down, Mic Up – EmComm Topics

Understanding ARES, RACES and AUXCOMM

One of the questions frequently asked by both new and experienced amateur radio operators is, "What is the difference between ARES, RACES, and AUXCOMM?"

While all three support emergency and disaster communications, they are separate programs with different missions, organizational structures, and activation procedures.

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) is a volunteer program sponsored by the ARRL. It is the largest and most widely recognized amateur radio emergency communications organization in the United States. ARES members train throughout the year and provide communications support for a wide variety of incidents and public service events. They may assist emergency management agencies, hospitals, the American Red Cross, shelters, public safety organizations, and community events whenever reliable communications are needed.

ARES can be activated for local incidents such as severe weather, community emergencies, search and rescue operations, or large public events, as well as statewide or national disasters. Participation is open to any licensed amateur radio operator who is willing to train and serve.

Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES)

RACES is a communications service established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and governed by the FCC. Unlike ARES, RACES operates only under the direction of a government emergency management agency.

RACES stations are typically registered with their local or state emergency management office and may be activated during declared emergencies or when government officials request communications support. Because it is a government-managed program, participation requirements and activation procedures vary by jurisdiction.

Many amateur radio operators are members of both ARES and RACES, allowing them to support their communities under either program when appropriate.

Auxiliary Communications (AUXCOMM)

AUXCOMM is not an amateur radio organization. Instead, it is an all-hazards communications training program developed by the U.S. Department of Homeland

Security to prepare volunteer communicators to work effectively within the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS). An AUXCOMM operator may use amateur radio, but they may also work with public safety radio systems, satellite communications, internet-based systems, cellular technologies, or other communications resources. The emphasis is on integrating with emergency management and supporting professional communications personnel during incidents. Many experienced ARES members pursue AUXCOMM training because it expands their understanding of emergency management and improves their ability to work alongside served agencies.

One point that's often misunderstood is that AUXCOMM is not a replacement for ARES or RACES. Think of it this way:

ARES = *Who you volunteer with (ARRL volunteer organization)*

RACES = *Who authorizes you during certain government-directed emergencies (Emergency Management/FEMA/FCC framework)*

AUXCOMM = *How you're trained to integrate into emergency management (DHS/FEMA communications training)*

Many of the most effective emergency communicators are active in ARES, registered with RACES where available, and have completed AUXCOMM training. Together, those experiences provide a well-rounded foundation for supporting served agencies before, during, and after emergencies.

Which One Should You Join?

For most amateur radio operators interested in emergency communications, ARES is the best place to start. It offers regular training, exercises, and opportunities to serve your local community while developing valuable operating skills.

If your local emergency management agency sponsors a RACES program, joining both ARES and RACES can provide additional opportunities to serve during government-directed emergencies. As you gain experience, consider completing AUXCOMM training to broaden your knowledge of emergency management, interoperability, and communications planning.

Although these three programs have different missions, they all share the same goal: ensuring reliable communications when communities need them most. Whether you're providing health and welfare messages after a storm, supporting a hospital during an exercise, or assisting emergency management during a disaster, your training and dedication as an amateur radio operator can make a meaningful difference.

Contest & Events

August 1-2 – 222 MHz and Up Distance Contest, ARRL

August 1-2 – North American QSO Party (CW), <https://ncjweb.com/naqp/>

August 8 – National Lighthouse Lightship Weekend. The Lewes Amateur Radio Society (LARS) will again be hosting NLLW at the Lightship Overfalls in Lewes at Canalfont Park. Setup at 0900. Last year we had over 15 in attendance for a great event. Contact Mike, N1MWU, LARS President via larsw3lrs@... for more information.

August 9 - POTA/Fox Hunt Event. Trap Pond State Park. Jason Beach. 0900-1500. Sussex Amateur Radio Assn. Contact Eric, WG3J, via wg3j61@... for more information.

August 8-9 – EME – 2.3 GHz & Up Contest ARRL

August 15-17 – 10 GHz & Up – Round 1, ARRL

August 16 – Rookie Roundup RTTY, ARRL

For information on all ARRL Contests visit www.arrl.org/contest-calendar

A Warm Welcome to Our Newest & Upgrading Members

Join me in welcoming the latest additions to the Amateur Radio Service in our vibrant community.

KD3DJI Keen Foong Lee

AC3RD Yuxuan Fan

KC3DFE Justine R. Koch

KC3HLF Charles W. Helwig

KC3HUC Walter J. Billings

KD3DMA Alexander Seiler

KD3DNJ Bradley D. Costello

Moving Forward Together

As we turn the page on another month, I want to thank each of you for the time, talent, and enthusiasm you bring to Amateur Radio. Whether you're exploring a new operating mode, activating a park, checking into a training net, mentoring a newly licensed operator, or standing ready to provide emergency communications, every contribution helps strengthen our Amateur Radio Service. The dedication of Delaware's radio amateurs continues to make our Section a respected and dependable resource for our communities.

As we look ahead, I encourage you to remain active, challenge yourself to learn something new, and invite others to discover the many opportunities our hobby has to offer. Together, we are preserving a proud tradition of public service, technical excellence, and fellowship while ensuring that Amateur Radio remains strong for future generations. Thank you for everything you do, and until next month, stay safe, have fun on the air, and I'll look forward to seeing your call sign in the log.