ARRL Delaware Section Manager
Newsletter – November 2026

Hello from Sussex County!

Cooler weather has arrived in Delaware, and for me, that means camping season! Camping brings together several of my favorite activities: hiking, amateur radio, and spending time outdoors.

I've been camping and hiking for more than 40 years, visiting state parks, national parks, and private campgrounds. At eligible parks, I enjoy activating Parks on the Air (POTA) from my campsite. When staying at private campgrounds, I head out to nearby parks for activations and explore hiking trails along the way.
I recently returned from western Maryland, where the fall colors were beautiful. One night, the temperature dipped to about 37°F—perfect campfire weather! One tip that has served me well: contact experienced POTA activators in the area before you visit. They often know the best operating locations, parking spots, and opportunities to activate two or three overlapping parks from one location. A few helpful conversations made this trip even better.
POTA also offers valuable practice for emergency communications. Setting up a portable station, making contacts, and working through equipment problems exercise many of the skills we need as EmComm operators. Troubleshooting RF interference, cable connections, audio settings, and rig control builds confidence that carries into ARES activities. Every outing is an opportunity to enjoy the hobby and become better prepared. And speaking of POTA, there is a new Kid on the Block to help us activators find operation locations. Take a look at FieldQTH, a free, phone-friendly mapping tool developed by Miguel, LX1MDA. It displays park boundaries, nearby parking, picnic tables, shelters, and campgrounds to help you find a practical place to set up. For those chasing "2-fers" or "3-fers," it also highlights overlapping parks and shows activation zones along many trails. Enter your call sign to see parks you've already activated, making it easier to plan somewhere new. There's no account required and nothing to install—just another useful tool to check before heading out. Remember that mapped boundaries are approximate, so confirm your operating location against official park maps before activating. I just started using it to get those 2fer and 3fers when I travel.

Delaware's Simulated Emergency Test Is Complete
Thank you to everyone who participated in the Delaware Section's Simulated Emergency Test (SET). Over several days, operators exercised a wide range of communications capabilities from their homes and served-agency locations.
Activities included:
• Simplex tests and daytime and evening nets to evaluate coverage and changing band conditions.
• Winlink messaging through gateways and direct VHF peer-to-peer connections.
• HF Winlink connections to gateways outside the Mid-Atlantic region, simulating an internet outage affecting the peninsula.
• HF peer-to-peer messaging using VARA HF between Rehoboth Beach and the New Castle County Emergency Operations Center.
• NTS radiogram traffic passed over simplex.

The statewide 2-meter simplex frequency, 146.550 MHz, supported communications and relays between Sussex and New Castle counties, including DEMA.
Each county will prepare an After-Action Report and Improvement Plan, along with a statewide report. These findings will guide future ARES training and our next statewide exercise.

To every operator who made time to participate: thank you. Your effort helps strengthen Delaware's emergency communications readiness.

W1AW/3 Returns to Delaware: December 2–8

The Delaware Section will host W1AW/3 for our second and final operating week in ARRL's America250 celebration, Wednesday, December 2, through Tuesday, December 8. During our April activation, Delaware stations made more than 10,000 contacts. Let's build on that success!

To participate, register at **ham-qtv.com**, our free operator scheduling site. Find "ARRL America 250 Worked All States Special Event-DELAWARE" and select "Request to Operate." A manager will review your request. Please provide your email address and cell phone number so we can resolve scheduling conflicts quickly. Once approved, reserve as many one-hour operating blocks as you would like. If your plans change, release your blocks so another operator can use them. Delaware Day on The Green: December 7

Join us on Monday, December 7, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at The Green in Dover as we celebrate Delaware becoming the first state to ratify the U.S. Constitution in 1787.

We'll operate as W1AW/3 from a heated communications bus with multiple operating positions. The location also offers a POTA opportunity—a great combination for a day on the air at our state capital. Setup begins around 8:30 a.m. Bring your own snacks or visit one of the nearby places to eat. Whether you're newly licensed or an experienced EmComm operator, come join the fun.

For information about either event, contact Steven, KC3DSO, at **kc3dso@gmail.com**.

Curious About Contesting? Try WWSAC

The Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest (WWSAC) offers a manageable way to try contesting, improve your SSB operating skills, and meet other amateurs.

This weekly, one-hour contest takes place Tuesdays from 0100–0159 UTC, which is Monday evening in Delaware. You can make a handful of contacts or spend the full hour chasing a score. Either way, you'll practice clear exchanges, efficient operating, and accurate logging. It's also a good opportunity to learn a contest logger. WWSAC provides a user-defined contest file for N1MM Logger+, along with installation instructions.

Visit **wwsac.com** for the rules, exchange, and setup details.

Fall Back November 1—and Check Your Net Schedule

Daylight saving time ends Sunday, November 1, at 2 a.m. Set your clocks back one hour before turning in Saturday night. Most phones update automatically, but remember to check wall clocks, appliances, and vehicle dashboards. The change also affects our operating schedules. The Delaware Traffic Net and Delmarva Emergency Net will begin at 5:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Beginning November 1, look for the nets on 3.904 MHz LSB, with adjustments as needed for interference. When checking other net and contest schedules, remember that UTC stays the same while our local time changes. Around the Atlantic Division

I attended the Southern New Jersey Section Convention at the SNJ Hamfest on Sunday, October 11. The weather reduced attendance, but vendors—including Ham Radio Outlet—still offered plenty to browse. I even found a few bargains on used Mastrant line and fiberglass guying rings. One highlight was the ARRL update from Atlantic Division Director Marty Newingham, AG3I. Former Division Director Bob Famiglio, K3RF, was also in attendance. Marty discussed ARRL's Spectrum Defense Program and the ongoing work required to protect amateur radio frequencies through technical expertise, advocacy, and representation before regulators. His remarks were a useful reminder that access to our bands depends on continued attention and involvement. We also discussed the Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act and ARRL's grassroots efforts to support it. Here in Delaware, Section staff are working with state legislators toward introducing a similar measure tailored to our state.

Check Your ARRL Communication Preferences
Take a few minutes to sign in at **arrl.org** and review your communication preferences. Make sure you're receiving the publications and updates you want. If you no longer want a particular mailing, use the preference settings or unsubscribe option. Marking an ARRL message as spam may affect delivery of other ARRL communications.

A Club Trip to W1AW
Interested in a club outing to ARRL Headquarters? Affiliated clubs can inquire about arranging an operating visit to W1AW—a memorable opportunity to get on the air from this historic station. Contact Joshua, AF5ID, at **jwells@arrl.org** for details and scheduling.

Stay Connected With the Delaware Section
Our Delaware Section Groups.io group is where I distribute Section news and announcements. Membership is free, and you can choose individual emails, a digest, or reading messages on the website.

Grid Down, Mic Up: EmComm Topics
AI's Growing Role in Amateur Radio
Artificial intelligence is becoming another tool available to amateur radio operators, including those involved in emergency communications. For training and preparation, AI can help draft exercise scenarios, create simulated message traffic, develop equipment checklists, and organize after-action observations. These applications can reduce administrative work and give volunteers more time to practice. Operational uses require closer attention. Transcriptions, translations, and summaries need operator review: an incorrect call sign, quantity, or deadline can change a message's meaning. Preserve original messages and clearly distinguish AI-generated material from approved traffic. Connectivity matters, too. Cloud services need an internet connection somewhere along the communications path. Some locally installed tools can work offline, provided suitable equipment and power are available. Whatever tools your team uses, practice with their limitations and maintain procedures that work without them.

Exploring AI Through Radio
Did you know that Winlink Express offers an AI query option through its Catalog Requests feature? In a version that supports it, look under Settings → Winlink Catalog Requests → AI Query.
I tried asking for packet setup guidance for my Kenwood TM-D710G and received a detailed response. It was an interesting demonstration of how a plain-language request can return useful reference material through radio email. As with any AI-generated instructions, compare the response with the manufacturer's documentation before relying on it. VarAC users can also explore ACie, its radio-based AI assistant, by connecting to a station offering an AI gateway. These tools are worth exploring during routine operating and training. For emergency use, the same standards still apply: verify information, protect sensitive details, and keep trained operators responsible for the traffic they handle. Weather, tide, and other time-sensitive information should come from authoritative sources with clear timestamps.

Upcoming Contests and Events
Date Event
October 31–November 1 ARRL EME Contest, 50–1296 MHz
November 1 Daylight saving time ends—set clocks back one hour
November 7 Delmarva Swap Meet at Al Waller's, K3TKJ, in Laurel
November 7–9 ARRL November Sweepstakes—CW
November 21–23 ARRL November Sweepstakes—Phone
December 2–8 Delaware Section W1AW/3 America250 operation
December 4–6 ARRL 160-Meter Contest

December 7 Delaware Day on The Green, Dover, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Special Event Station running W1AW/3. All are Welcome!
ARRL contest dates follow the published UTC calendar; local start and end dates may differ. Find complete schedules and rules at the ARRL Contest Calendar.

Welcome to Our Newest Amateurs
Please join me in welcoming these operators to our amateur radio community:

Call Sign	Name
KB3IOA	Daniel Evans
KD3DZR	Brent Laise

We look forward to hearing you on the air. Introduce yourself, check into a net, and ask questions—there are plenty of operators ready to help you get started.

Keep Practicing, Keep Participating
With this year's SET complete, our next step is to turn its lessons into action. Review what worked, address the problems you encountered, and keep practicing between exercises. Every net check-in, portable activation, and successfully passed message builds experience. We train so that when something doesn't work, we know how to respond.

Thank you for everything you do to keep the Delaware Section active, welcoming, and prepared.

Until next month, stay involved, keep learning, and enjoy amateur radio!