

# The ARRL Letter



May 9, 2024

John E. Ross, KD8IDJ, [Editor](#)

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## ARRL Learning Center Features Two New Emergency Communication Training Courses

ARRL has released [two new courses](#) to train emergency communications (EmComm) operators for volunteering within the [Amateur Radio Emergency Service® \(ARES®\)](#). Both courses are within the ARRL Learning Center.

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The Basic EmComm course is designed to get a new volunteer started. It provides basic knowledge and tools for any emergency communications volunteer and contains three modules and 11 topics, including required prerequisites. It's expected to take approximately 10 - 20 hours to complete.





The Intermediate EmComm course builds on the lessons learned in the first course and equips volunteer radio amateurs with the tools needed to thrive in the fast-paced environment of public service communications and to understand the legal rights and responsibilities of working with a served agency, as well as teach them and how ham radio fits into the broader incident command (IC) structure.


The new courses replace the previous EC-001 and EC-016 programs, however, certificates of completion earned for the previous courses are still valid. "Training is not a one-and-done thing. Throughout my firefighting and emergency management career, we were constantly taking new courses to reinforce existing knowledge and introduce new concepts," said ARRL Director of Emergency Management Josh Johnston, KE5MHV. "Engaged volunteers should want to stay up to date on advances in the science of emergency communications. I'd even encourage veteran operators to take the new courses."

In 2023, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) [revised the Guide for National Emergency Preparedness](#) to specifically include amateur radio. ARRL and FEMA entered into a new Memoranda of Understanding in May 2023 that outlined the importance of trained radio amateurs within the response ecosystem. "Amateur radio is as important as ever in emergency management," said Johnston. "The new courses will keep hams trained to serve effectively."

The ARRL Learning Center at [learn.arrl.org](http://learn.arrl.org) is a member benefit and features many ways to get the most out of your



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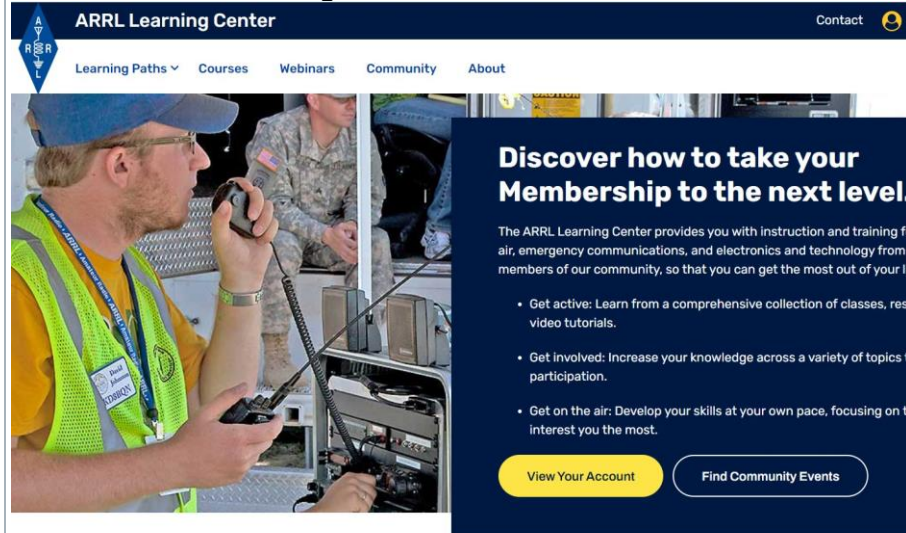
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amateur radio license. The Basic and Intermediate EmComm courses are available to anyone with a free [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org) account. Users must log in to the ARRL Learning Center with this account, and functionality of the site relies on cookies being enabled.



### What do you want to do with Amateur Radio?

Choose your own adventure! The ARRL Learning Center organizes its course content around Learning Paths, making it easy to navigate and explore the field. Select the path that interests you most to get started.

Above: A screenshot of the ARRL Learning Center at [learn.arrl.org](http://learn.arrl.org).

## Focus on Public Safety Relationship Building at the 2024 ARRL National Convention

Those attending the 2024 ARRL National Convention at Dayton Hamvention® will have an opportunity to learn more about how amateur radio is relevant and highly involved in the modern emergency management landscape. The convention is May 17 - 19 in Xenia, Ohio.

ARRL Director of Emergency Management Josh Johnston, KE5MHV, will host a booth for the [Amateur Radio Emergency Service®](#) -- ARES®. The booth will be supported by highly



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experienced ARES leaders and members of the ARRL Emergency Communications and Field Services Committee. On Friday, Johnston and four representatives from the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) will lead the forum "ARES®, SAFECOM®, and Building Relationships" as part of the ARRL National Convention track. CISA is the federal agency SAFECOM serves. Together, they'll lead a discussion about how amateur radio emergency communications groups can establish and foster relationships with served agencies.

Johnston is ARRL's representative member of SAFECOM®. In 2023, [ARRL was elected to serve on SAFECOM®](#), a program of the US Department of Homeland Security. SAFECOM supports the public safety community to improve the emergency communications ecosystem. This relationship gives ARRL a seat at the decision-making table for emergency communications policy nationwide.

"Amateur radio operators are in a unique position to serve agencies of many different types, but that relationship has to be well established long before a crisis," said Johnston, who emphasized that local partnerships are just as important as national-level relationships. ARES groups work with local, state, and county governments, and non-government affiliated organizations, including local offices of the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and faith-based organizations.

The forum is held on Friday, May 17 at 9:15 AM in forum room three, where the majority of ARRL National Convention programming will take place. The National Convention program is published at [www.arrl.org/expo](http://www.arrl.org/expo) or within in the [ARRL Events](#) app. Buy tickets to the convention on the [Hamvention](#) website.

## **ARRL Volunteers Obtain Ham Exemption to Pennsylvania Handsfree Law**

ARRL volunteers in Pennsylvania have successfully protected the legal right to use amateur radio while operating



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mobile within the state. A handsfree distracted driving bill had worked its way through the legislature over the past several years, and ARRL Atlantic Division Director Bob Famiglio, K3RF, successfully advocated for an exemption for licensed radio amateurs. "The bill survived until just before the latest vote, which stripped out our exemption but left in exemptions for commercial drivers, including truck drivers, bus drivers, and public transportation [drivers]," he wrote in a message to ARRL members in Pennsylvania.



In April, the exemption was stripped from the bill, sending Pennsylvania hams into a state of worry. ARRL members in the state rallied, contacting their state legislators to explain the benefit that licensed operators provide to the state. The bill also was going to remove the ability for first responders, such as volunteer firefighters, to use radios in their personally owned vehicles. "Hundreds of emails then went out to legislators and such and back to me. We also helped our volunteer emergency responders who were in the same boat as us with radio use from their personal cars. Many members are also emergency responders as well, and they picked up on this too," said Famiglio.

This week, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives voted in favor of accepting the bill with the exemption. The senate passed it last summer. The bill is now on its way to Governor Josh Shapiro's desk, where he is expected to sign it. Mobile use of amateur radio will continue in Pennsylvania, thanks to ARRL advocacy and government relations carried out by member-volunteers.

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## Amateur Radio in the News

ARRL Public Information Officers, Coordinators, and many other member-volunteers help keep amateur radio and ARRL [in the news](#).

["Club Stays Amateur Radio-active"](#) / The Carroll News (Virginia) May 2, 2024 -- The Briarpatch Amateur Radio Club.

["Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club, Railroad Museum of South Florida to celebrate National Train Day May 11"](#) / North Fort Myers Neighbor (Florida) May 3, 2024 -- *The Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club is an ARRL Affiliated Club.*

[Share](#) any amateur radio media hits you spot with us.

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## ARRL Podcasts

### On the Air

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ARRL Forums at Dayton Hamvention 2024



This year's Dayton Hamvention, coming up May 17 - 19 in Xenia, Ohio, will be extra special -- it's also the 2024 ARRL National Convention. ARRL Director of Marketing & Innovation Bob Inderbitzen, NQ1R, joins this month's podcast to share details about ARRL-sponsored activities at the show, including several of the ARRL-sponsored forums and the Youth Rally.

### ARRL Audio News

Listen to [ARRL Audio News](#), available every Friday. ARRL Audio News is a summary of the week's top news stories in the world of amateur radio and ARRL, along with interviews and other features.

The On the Air podcast and ARRL Audio News are available on blubrry, iTunes, and Apple Podcasts -- [On the Air](#) | [ARRL Audio News](#).



## Announcements

**The US Department of Defense is hosting this year's Armed Forces Day (AFD) Crossband Test on Saturday, May 11.** For more than 50 years, military and amateur stations have taken part in this event, which is an interoperability exercise between amateur and government radio stations. The event is open to all licensed amateur radio operators and will not impact any public or private communications. The AFD Crossband Test is a unique opportunity to test two-way communications between military communicators and radio stations in the Amateur Radio Service. Find details, such as planned activations, frequencies, and QSL information on [ARRL News](#).

**Queens of the Mountains will be held June 1 - 3.** The goal of this woman-ham (YL) Summits on the Air (SOTA) event is

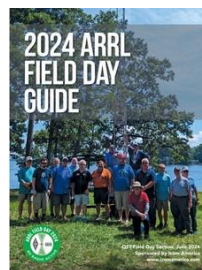
to encourage and inspire YLs to get on the air and on a mountain for SOTA. There will be multiple special event stations across the US on the air for a fun weekend of sisterhood on the summits. Special certificates will be available for YLs activating and chasing. Look for the special event calls W0Q, W1Q, W3Q, W4Q, W5Q, W6Q, W7Q, W8Q, and W9Q, as well as #QOM and #YLSOTA on [SOTAWATCH3](#). For more information or questions, email [Amy Haptonstall, AG7GP](#). The Young Ladies Radio League, K4LMB, originated in 1939. Members are from all walks of life, ages, and levels of ham radio interests. Whether they got into the hobby to talk locally or to travel around the world to the strangest of places, the one radio interest they have in common is comradery with other YLs. To learn more, visit the [Young Ladies Radio League](#).

**International Museums Weekends (IMW) 2024 will take place June 15 - 16 and 22 - 23.** The purpose of this event is to activate an amateur radio special event station in as many museums around the world as possible. Frequencies, bands, and modes are at the discretion of the operators, as is the museum selection. For this event, the definition of museum can be loosely interpreted. It could be a collection of old cars or one of a kind paintings from a neighborhood artist. Through this event, organizers hope to present amateur radio to the public to garner support and understanding of the hobby. The first IMW was held in 2002 with over 80 museums, featuring small, local venues and large prestigious operations. The event was especially popular among amateur radio operators in the United Kingdom. For information about registration and event awards, visit [International Museums Weekends 2024](#).

**The June issue of QST features the 2024**

**ARRL Field Day Guide.** The multi-page section features articles, tips, and checklists to help make your club's activation a success.

Readers can learn more about the Get On The Air (GOTA) station and get tips on band planning from propagation experts. The June 2024 Digital Edition of QST is available now at [www.arrl.org/magazines](http://www.arrl.org/magazines) or in the ARRL Magazines app. Find complete resources and rules for 2024 ARRL Field Day at [www.arrl.org/field-day](http://www.arrl.org/field-day).



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**In Brief...**

**Dick Rutan, KB6LQS, record-setting pilot, has become a Silent Key.** He passed away at the age of 85 on May 3,



Dick Rutan, KB6LQS, poses with his airplane. [Photo from Dick Rutan/Facebook]

2024, surrounded by family. Rutan was an ARRL member. In 1986, Rutan made international headlines for his flight in Voyager with copilot Jeana Yeager. The pair flew around the world (nonstop and unrefueled) in 9 days, 3 minutes, and 44 seconds. Rutan was a highly decorated United States Air Force combat pilot in Vietnam. His civilian test pilot career had him flying everything from military jets to rocket-powered airplanes, in which he set speed records. In 2022, Mojave Air & Space Port in Mojave, California, was renamed Mojave Air & Space Port at Rutan Field in honor of the contributions he and his brother Burt had made to aviation. Read more about Dick Rutan on [ARRL News](#).

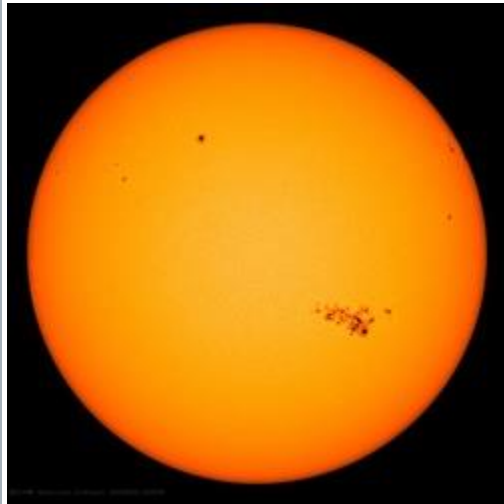
**[Fair Radio Sales](#), an iconic electronic military surplus store in Lima, Ohio, announced in August 2023 that they would be going out of business in October of that year.** Phil Sellati, owner of Fair Radio Sales, told *The ARRL Letter* editor last year that it was time to close the business. "I took over the business that my dad started in 1947, and after 50 years, it's time to close the doors," he said. Sellati had an offer on the building and felt that it was time to move on and was wondering what might come next. But they haven't closed their doors just yet. At the urging of many amateur radio operators, Fair Radio Sales is still in business and will be open during the 2024 Dayton Hamvention®. The company's website recently posted: "Fair Radio will be open until June 28, 2024. We will then prepare for an auction to be held in the summer." Thousands of amateur radio operators, collectors, experimenters, and shortwave listeners have visited the store over the years. The shelves and aisles are full of old military radios and receivers. Many other electronic surplus stores, like J.J. Glass Surplus in California and Ritco Electronics in Virginia, closed several years ago.



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## The K7RA Solar Update

Tad Cook, K7RA, of Seattle, Washington, reports for this week's ARRL Propagation Bulletin, ARLP0019:



This solar disk image was taken on May 9, 2024. [Photo courtesy of NASA SDO/HMI].

Seven new sunspot groups appeared this week: one each day from May 2 - 4, two on May 5, and one on May 6.

The average daily sunspot number increased from 124.6 to 138.3, and the average daily solar flux rose from 144.9 to 177.6.

The average daily planetary A index climbed from 9.6 to 14.4, while middle latitude numbers went from 8.6 to 12.3.

The most active day was May 2 when the planetary A index was 44. Alaska's college A index was 61. The was caused by two coronal mass ejections striking Earth, triggering a G3 geomagnetic storm.

The solar flux is peaking now, and it may peak again at 205 around June 11 - 12.

The predicted solar flux is 225 on May 9 - 10; 220 on May 11; 215 on May 12 - 13; 210 on May 14 - 15; 205, 200, 195, 190, 185, 180, 175, 170, 165, and 170 on May 16 - 25; 175 on May 26 - 27; 170 on May 28; 165 on May 29 - 31, and 175, 180, 185, and 190 on June 1 - 4.

The predicted planetary A index is 12, 8, 5, 8, 12, and 10 on May 9 - 14; 5 on May 15 - 22; 8, 12, 8, 5, 12, and 8 on May 23 - 28; 5, 5, and 8 on May 29 - 31, and 12 on June 1 - 3.

Sunspot numbers for May 2 - 8 were 125, 121, 136, 152, 148, 144, and 142, with a mean of 138.3. The 10.7-centimeter flux was 141.9, 156, 166.6, 176.9, 171.2, 203.6, and 227.1, with a mean of 177.6. The estimated planetary A indices were 44, 10, 6, 12, 15, 7, and 7, with a mean of 14.4. The middle latitude A index was 24, 16, 5, 12, 13, 6, and 10, with a mean of 12.3.

Send your tips, questions, or comments to [k7ra@arrl.net](mailto:k7ra@arrl.net). A comprehensive K7RA Solar Update is posted Fridays on the ARRL website. For more information concerning radio propagation, [visit](#) the ARRL Technical Information Service, [read](#) "What the Numbers Mean...", and [check out](#) the Propagation Page of Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA. A propagation bulletin [archive](#) is available. For customizable propagation charts, visit the [VOACAP Online for Ham Radio](#) website.

[Share](#) your reports and observations.

A weekly, full report is posted on [ARRL News](#).

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## Just Ahead in Radiosport

- May 9 -- QRP Minimal Art Session (CW)
- May 11 -- FISTS Saturday Sprint (CW)
- May 11 - 12 -- CQ-M International DX Contest (CW, phone)
- May 11 - 12 -- VOLTA WW RTTY Contest (digital)
- May 11 - 12 -- SKCC Weekend Sprintathon (CW)
- May 11 - 12 -- Canadian Prairies QSO Party (CW, phone)
- May 11 - 12 -- 50 MHz Spring Sprint (CW, phone, digital)
- May 13 -- 4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint (CW, phone)
- May 13 -- RSGB 80m Club Championship SSB (phone)
- May 14 -- DARC FT4 Contest (FT4)

- May 15 -- VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest (FT8)
- May 16 - 17 -- Walk for the Bacon QRP Contest (CW)
- May 16 -- NAQCC CW Sprint (CW)
- May 16 -- NTC QSO Party (CW)

Visit the [ARRL Contest Calendar](#) for more events and information.

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## Upcoming Section, State, and Division Conventions

- May 11 | [ARRL Nebraska State Convention](#), Lincoln, Nebraska
- May 17 - 19 | [Dayton Hamvention](#), hosting the ARRL National Convention, Xenia, Ohio
- May 31 - June 2 | [SEA-PAC](#), hosting the ARRL Northwestern Division Convention, Seaside, Oregon
- June 1 | [Atlanta Hamfest](#), hosting the ARRL Georgia Section Convention, Marietta, Georgia
- June 9 | [BreezeShooters Hamfest](#), hosting the ARRL Western Pennsylvania Section Convention, Butler, Pennsylvania
- June 15 | [ARRL Maine State Convention & Hamfest](#), Augusta, Maine
- June 15 | [Knoxville Hamfest and Electronics Convention](#), sponsoring the ARRL Delta Division Convention, Knoxville, Tennessee
- July 12 -13 | [HamCon: Zion](#), sponsoring the ARRL Rocky Mountain Division Convention, St. George, Utah
- July 13 | [SVARC Summer Hamfest](#), sponsoring the ARRL North Dakota Section Convention, Minot, North Dakota
- July 20 | [SEARC Tailgate Hamfest](#), sponsoring the ARRL South Dakota State Convention, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Search the [ARRL Hamfest and Convention Database](#) to find events in your area.

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## Have News for ARRL?

Submissions for the ARRL Letter and ARRL News can be sent to [news@arrl.org](mailto:news@arrl.org). -- *John E. Ross, KD8IDJ, ARRL News Editor*

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- *The ARRL Letter* is available in an accessible format, posted weekly to the [Blind-hams Groups.io](#) email group. The group is dedicated to discussions about amateur radio as it concerns blind hams, plus related topics including ham radio use of adaptive technology.
- [NCJ -- National Contest Journal](#). Published bimonthly, features articles by top contesters, letters, hints, statistics, scores, NA Sprint, and QSO parties.
- [QEX -- A Forum for Communications Experimenters](#). Published bimonthly, features technical articles, construction projects, columns, and other items of interest to radio amateurs and communications professionals. Free of charge to ARRL members...
- [Subscribe](#) to the *ARES Letter* (monthly public service and emergency communications news), the *ARRL Contest Update* (biweekly contest newsletter), Division and Section news alerts, and much more!
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## ***The ARRL Letter***

*The ARRL Letter* offers a weekly summary of essential news of interest to active amateurs that is available in advance of publication in **QST**, our official journal. *The ARRL Letter* strives to be timely, accurate, concise and readable.

Much of the *ARRL Letter* content is also available in audio form in **ARRL Audio News**.

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**Editorial questions or comments:** John E. Ross, KD8IDJ, at [news@arrl.org](mailto:news@arrl.org).

## **Plain-Text**

The ARRL E-Letter e-mail is also available in plain-text version:

### **Outlook Express**

1. From the Inbox view, select the Tools menu and the Options selection.

2. Click the Read tab

3. Check the Read All Messages In Plain Text box. When you open the e-mail, it will be in plain text without images. Other e-mail programs may be able to make a Mail Rule for e-mail received from the address memberlist@www.arrl.org so that the plain-text-only display is selected automatically.

### **Outlook 2007**

Use the same procedure as for Outlook Express, although the global option is under "Tools/Trust Center/E-mail Security".

### **Thunderbird**

Use the menu item "View/Message Body As/Plain Text" or "View/Message Source" options.

### **OS X Mail (Mac)**

Use the "View/Message/Plain Text Alternative" menu item.

### **GMail**

Use the "Message text garbled?" link in the drop-down menu at the upper right of the displayed message block. pine, alpine Set "prefer-plain-text" in your ~/.pinerc configuration file: feature-list=..., prefer-plain-text, ...