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The President's Corner: Rod KQ4FNO

Field Day is over, and now we await the results - hopefully before next year! We have already reviewed the results, which are available on Discord under both Resources and General Chat. This year, we made 3,085 QSOs compared with 3,157 in 2025, for a score of 15,487 points compared with 15,440 in 2025. We did manage to make a strong showing, but there is still a lot of work to do. One major area for improvement is our performance on the 6-meter band.

I have asked everyone involved with Field Day to document any problems they observed and suggest possible solutions. You can send it to me at KQ4FNO@Gmail.Com.

Next up is our Swapfest on Saturday, August 8th, from 8:00 a.m. to noon. David, KI4W, is looking for help with setup on Friday at 2:00 p.m.; volunteers to watch the door from 6:30 to 8:00 a.m. so attendees do not enter while vendors are setting up; raffle ticket sellers at the front door; guides for VE testing, which is in a new location this year; and someone to watch the Club tables. Please let David know if you can help. I hope this will be a successful year for Swapfest.

Coming up, we have inventory and maintenance work planned for the Club's radios and tower parts. A committee is reviewing what we need to purchase so each station can operate independently. We are considering applying for a grant to obtain Starlink internet service for events.

Temperatures have been high recently, no POTA events have been scheduled aside from informal, "off-the-cuff" activations with invitations to join. Hopefully, we can resume them once the weather cools. In the meantime, get out and activate from your vehicle with the AC running! I saw Dom, NC4XL recently activated at Lake Rim Park from his vehicle because of the rain. I am hoping to test some different antennas at home, especially one for 6 meters, which should be improving.

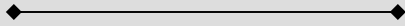
The next "BIG" event after Swapfest will be the Christmas Dinner. Please start thinking about it. If you have suggestions for improving or changing it, let me know so we can discuss them later. If you suggest changing the menu or location, please include a specific recommendation.

The idea of a 10-meter net is gaining momentum. I joined the net last week. There were more participants than I have heard in a long time including out-of-state contacts. Let's support those leading this effort: KT5H Hector, AK4YS Dale and WO4SFA Don. They hold nets on Saturday mornings at 9:00 a.m. and Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., giving everyone at least two chances to check in.

Rod KQ4FNO

CFARS Officers

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 Contest Coord.....Hector KB4LOA hector.gonzalez@live.com
 Webmaster.....Jim K4BUC jbuccieri@twc.com

Club Repeaters

(PL 100 Hz)

K4MN

2 m 146.910/146.310
 70 cm 444.400/449.400

K4MN

6 m 53.810/52.810

WA4FLR

2 m 147.330/147.930

Club Membership

Dues

CFARS club membership dues are due and payable in January each year. CFARS does offer you the option to pay your dues no later than March. Yearly dues are \$20.00. CFARS offers a lifetime membership option for \$200.00. If your dues are not paid by March you will not be a voting member of the club. The right to vote on issues for the club comes with club membership. PO Box 36106, Fayetteville, NC 28303



The Cape Fear Amateur Radio Society News is the official newsletter of the Cape Fear Amateur Radio Society. It is published monthly as a PDF. The newsletter is emailed monthly when the latest version is available. Please provide your email address to the Newsletter Editor. The CFARS News welcomes articles and other contributions. **Please email submissions to the newsletter to cfarsnews@gmail.com.** The Editor reserves the right to edit any and all pieces. **The submission deadline for each month's News is the last day of the preceding month.** The views expressed in the CFARS News are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or CFARS.

CFARS Nets

Net	Day (s)	Time Local	Band / Freq
Evening Net	Daily	1900	146.910 Repeater
Possum Trot	M - F	0500 - 0700	146.910 Repeater
ADY Net	M - F	0810	SSB 3.855
CW Fix Net	Tues / Thurs	0730	CW 3.555
DMR Net	Sunday	2000	TGIF 910 Talkgroup

*Upcoming Hamfests***August 8, 2026**

26th Annual CFARS Swapfest
Fayetteville, North Carolina
cfarsnc.org

August 15, 2026

Florence Hamfest
Florence, South Carolina

September 4 - 5, 2026

Shelby Hamfest
Shelby, North Carolina
shelbyhamfest.com

**CFARS VE Testing**

The 2026 VE exams will take place at

Peace Presbyterian Church
3203 Ramsey Street
Fayetteville, NC 28301

Dates:

August 8, 2026 - 7046 Ramsey St. - Cumberland County Shrine
October 10, 2026 - Peace Presbyterian Church





July 2026 Club Meeting Minutes

The monthly meeting of the Cape Fear Amateur Radio Society was held at 7:00 pm, Monday, July 20th, 2026, in the Fellowship Hall of Peace Presbyterian Church, 3202 Ramsey Street, Fayetteville, NC.

President Rod MacLean KQ4FNO called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our country. Don, KO4IHM gave the invocation. Rod led the introductions in the usual CFARS fashion. There were 31 members and guests present.



WO4SFA made a motion to approve June's meeting minutes, AK4YS seconded, the club voted, and the motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Treasurer: Mike KC4ABE gave the financial report.

Net Manager: Larry N4USB no report provided, stay tuned to the local nets to hear the latest net statistics.

Health & Welfare: Bill KJ4OFD no report.

Repeaters: David K4FXC no report.

Field Day: No report.

Membership: David KI4W - No new members were introduced at this meeting.

Contesting: Hector KT5H check contestcalendar.com for contests and events. Anyone planning to participate in the NAQP CW contest on August 1st please let Chris KR4I know as he is registering up to 5 participants as a team, as of 20 July only 2 participants are confirmed on the team.

VE Coordinator: Jim K4BUC - The next testing session will be at the Cumberland County Shrine Club on August 8th, 2026, check in starts at 9am. Make sure you bring a copy of your license and if you are not licensed bring a copy of your FRN or you will be turned away.

Swapfest: David, KI4W, went over the need for volunteers to help setup on the Friday afternoon and to have security available for Saturday Morning at 0630. There will be a table for Club members to put items they want to sell, (individual pieces – not a full table). A volunteer to look after that will also be required. Another volunteer to handle raffle ticket sales is required. Please contact David, KI4W.

Public Relations: Hector KT5H, continue posting ham radio and club activity on the CFARS Facebook page.

Emergency Coordinator: David WD4NC - nothing additional to report.

Newsletter: Any submissions please send to Mike KN4XP by end of month, ideally in Microsoft Word format. cfarsnews@gmail.com. Emails and .pdf files are difficult to format for the newsletter.

Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month.

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Web Site: Any submissions please send to Jim K4BUC. Jim asked that anyone having pictures to put on the website send them to him. jbuccieri@twc.com

ARRL Liaison: David K4FXC is still working with the ARRL.

Possum Trot Net: Alan KQ4QEM - PT net continues Weekdays from 5:00am to 7:00am.

Skywarn: No report.

Event Coordinator: Paul NC4PB no report.

AUXCOM: David WD4NC—no report.

Old Business: Rod, KQ4FNO, gave a synopsis of the Field Day event, and gave basic numbers from the ARRL Submission sheet (copy of which is on Discord under general Chat and Resources). Total number of QSOs this year was 3,085 and a point total of 15,487. The 2025 event had 3,157 QSOs with a point total of 15,440. This year we had 72 less QSOs and 47 more points. The underuse of the 100ft tower was brought up with the recommendation it be co-located with CW and VHF be run from there. A request was made that members write up items they thought could be improved with recommendations as to how to do that, and be forwarded to Rod, KQ4FNO, to be presented next month. All Club radios, and equipment, are being recalled in August for inventory and maintenance. This will include the rotor, cable, hexbeam and control box from Rick's tower. David, K4FXC and Jared, KR4EKK were nominated to form a committee to look at required purchases of equipment for all three radios to be able to set up 80 meter loop and 80M EFHW antennas. To include coax and ropes. Will also include equipment for Club Tower and Bluesky mast. In addition to Field Day, a discussion was led about the 'booking' of the Special Forces Compound for events next year. They are planning their calendar and if we don't let them know we could lose our ability to use the compound. The following motions and votes were held: To hold Field Day 27 at SF Compound, Motion by Rod, KQ4FNO, Second by Hector, KT5H, Passed by majority vote. To Hold NC QSO Party at SF Compound, motion by Rod, KQ4FNO, second by Ed, N4ESA, passed by majority vote. To hold Winter Field Day at another location than SF compound, motion by Travis, N4BEL, second by Hector, KT5H, passed by majority vote.

New Business: Micro Grant will utilize funds from the Club to purchase the items required for the Winlink nodes and will be reimbursed by Cumberland County under the terms of the grant. The Club was made aware again that a 10-10 Chapter was being established and that the Club should be in support of this Chapter. Nets are held on Saturday morning, 0930, and on Thursday evening at 1930. Net time will vary until a satisfactory time and place become used. Dale, AK4YS, Don, WO4SFA and Hector, KT5H are working the Chapter possibilities. Motion to approve by Dale, AK4YS, seconded by Hector, KT5H, the club voted and the motion was passed by majority vote. David, K4FXC, made note that Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC) are offering grants for improvement of digital communications. It was suggested that the Club look at trying to get a grant to install Starlink at the SF Compound for future operations. Motion by Ed, N4Esa, second by Rod, KQ4FNO and passed by majority vote to attempt a grant through ARDC. WO4SFA recommended that any remaining funds, or a minimum of \$100.00, be donated to the Salvation Army. They provided take-out meals during the Field Day. Pete, K4QFK, donated \$100.00 to the Club to cover that donation. Mike, KC4ABE, Treasurer will forward to the Salvation Army.

Program: None.

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Announcements: None.

Door Prize Drawing: Bob KL7NL won a logbook, Don WO4SFA won a logbook, Don KO4IHM won a logbook, David WD4NC won a logbook, Louis KQ2L won a Sea Lab 2000, David KI4W won a CW key, Pete K4QFK won an antenna and Louis KQ2L won a tool kit.

50/50 DRAWING: \$160.00 was collected, the winning ticket held by Michael, KM4UHI who won \$80.00

Adjournment: David WD4NC made a motion to adjourn and David K4FXC seconded, the club voted and the meeting was adjourned at 8:30PM.

Submitted: Chris KR4I
CFARS Recorder

**From The Vice President
Paul NC4PB**

Bridging The Gap: Using Winlink ICS Forms in AUXCOMM

When disaster strikes and traditional cellular networks or internet infrastructure collapse, formal emergency management relies on Auxiliary Communications (AUXCOMM). AUXCOMM volunteers—typically licensed amateur radio operators trained in NIMS/ICS guidelines—fill the critical gap between affected areas and Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs).

However, sending raw voice messages or unstructured text can lead to misinterpretation, delays, and administrative bottlenecks. That is where the combination of Winlink Express and standardized Incident Command System (ICS) forms becomes the gold standard for tactical data communications.

The Role of Winlink in Emergency Communications

Winlink is a global radio email system that allows operators to transmit email messages containing text and attachments over HF and VHF/UHF radio bands without relying on local internet connections.

In an emergency scenario, Winlink bridges the gap between field stations operating on battery or solar power and agency officials sitting in connected EOCs or regional headquarters.

Why ICS Forms Matter for AUXCOMM

Emergency management officials do not think in amateur radio terms like "QST", "QSL" or informal traffic; they think in Incident Command System (ICS) documentation. To be effective, volunteer communicators must speak the official language of the incident command structure. It's important to remember that if we are deployed for an event, we must take off the "ham" hat and put on the auxiliary communicator hat.

Standardized forms eliminate ambiguity and create an auditable paper trail. The most frequently used templates in AUXCOMM deployments include:

Form	Title	Primary Purpose
ICS 213	General Message	Standard written communication between incident personnel.
ICS 213RR	Resource Request	Formal requests for personnel, supplies, or equipment.
ICS 205 / 205A	Incident Radio Communications Plan	Mapping frequencies, talkgroups, and assignments.
ICS 214	Activity Log	Tracking personnel hours, location shifts, and key events.

How Winlink Simplifies Form Transmission

Transmitting a full paper form character-by-character over limited radio bandwidth would be painfully slow and prone to human transcription errors. Winlink solves this problem through XML-driven HTML templates:

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Local Rendering: The sender fills out a web-like form inside Winlink Express.

Data Compression: Winlink extracts only the raw form field data (XML/text data) and compresses it into a tiny payload—often under 1 to 2 KB.

Radio Transmission: The compressed data streams rapidly across radio frequencies using digital modes such as VARA HF/FM or ARDOP.

Automatic Reconstruction: On the receiving end, Winlink takes the raw data payload and automatically renders it back into a fully formatted, printable HTML version of the exact ICS form. As a result, an EOC manager receives a clean, standardized, printable ICS-213 form in their inbox without ever needing to know the message traveled tens or hundreds of miles over VHF or HF radio waves.

Essential Best Practices for Operators

As with any skill, practice makes perfect. The time to learn how to populate an ICS form to send updates or to request resources is not the day that you get deployed to a shelter or other location. I, as well as several other AUXCOMM team members practice these skills weekly to be sure that we can perform under pressure when called to do so. At the end of this article I will list several nets that you can check into weekly via Winlink in order to get practice and feedback. Other best practices include:

Practice Off-Grid Navigation: Always store template updates locally on the pc that you use for Winlink so you can populate forms offline without needing internet access to load web scripts.

Be Concise: While digital forms streamline delivery, radio spectrum remains a shared resource. Keep message text direct, precise, and operational.

Pre-Format Frequent Messages: Create saved drafts for standard status updates, check-ins, or damage assessment reports prior to deploying into the field.

Verify Recipient Callsigns & Gateways: Test connection paths (VHF vs. HF VARA) before an incident occurs to establish reliable propagation windows.

Weekly Winlink Nets – Great for practice and training!

- **Winlink Wednesday** – Every Wednesday 00:00 to 23:59 ET. Does not accept telnet check-ins. Has to leave your station via RF. Also has morning and afternoon P2P sessions. Receives over 1400 check-ins in a 24-hour period. See <https://winlinkwednesday.net> for training videos, a participant map posted on Thursday, and lots of other info. Ran by KN4LQN in Virginia.
- **Florida Winlink Net** – Every day. Net runs from Tuesday 9:00 am to following Tuesday 9:00 am. Also accepts P2P, JS8, and VARA Chat check-ins. Website has a daily P2P schedule. Ran by W4AKH. Go to <https://w4akh.net> for schedules, a How-To for P2P connections, and a net participant map.
- **Great Lakes Area Winlink Net (GLAWN)** – Open for check-ins Monday through Saturday. Sends out weekly emails with a specific task for that week's net. If you participate in that week's task your check-in will be graded and sent back. You can always just submit a normal check-in as well.

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All of these nets have a specific format for their check-ins. Be sure to read the weekly email from each to see what they want for that week. For example, for the Winlink Wednesday net, on the first Wednesday of the month they request a weather snapshot. On the third Wednesday of the month, they want an ICS-213 form with the check-in information.

All of these nets exist to give us the opportunity to practice and hone our skills as auxiliary communicators. It's also great practice for reading the weekly email to determine what the net control wants for that week so we can be sure to send in the requested information. It's all about the training!

If you have any questions at all or would like more information on how to set up Winlink on your computer, both Kolt, KF6GRG, or myself, NC4PB will be happy to assist you. Just let us know. The easiest method for contacting either one of us is on Discord through an instant message. If you are not on our Discord server yet and would like to be, let me know and I can email you a link to join.

Auxcomm

Hello Club

We are moving into our storm season and so far, we have been lucky. Three times in July I watched a weather event that brought Hail, Thunder, and a few Tornados. All three times the storm went around us and we just got rain. That is a good thing.

In August I do not plan an outside event. It is just too hot and after working all day, I know you need a break. But let's not forget that September is coming and that is when we see most of our Hurricanes. Check your gear and back up power and be sure you are ready to go. If you are one of the ones that I made a VHF, go box for, be sure to charge up the battery and test it out by checking into a few nets with it.

For a list of items needed for home supply, go to the FEMA site and they have a good load out that you should have on hand in event of a major event in our area. We never know when a storm or a call out will put us to work. Check your go-bag and be sure it is ready as well.

Last note, thank you everyone that has been working with me with the sky warn net and the 2nd Tuesday night net, get with me and give a hand calling this net. It is good training for when you may be asked to sit in a shelter and help or even be in the EOC and must send traffic. If you know of training, you think you need. Send it to me and we will do our best to set it up.

Stay safe and 73.

David WD4NC

Which Battery is Best for Portable HF Operations

One of the most important pieces of any portable HF station isn't the radio—it's the battery. Whether you're activating a park, operating from a campsite, or preparing for emergency communications, choosing the right battery can make the difference between several enjoyable hours on the air and an early trip home. Today, amateur radio operators generally choose from three battery types: Lithium Iron Phosphate (LiFePO₄), Lithium-Ion (Li-ion), and Sealed Lead Acid (SLA).

LiFePO₄ batteries have become the preferred choice for portable HF operation. They are lightweight, provide a stable voltage throughout most of their discharge cycle, and can withstand thousands of charge cycles. Unlike many other battery chemistries, LiFePO₄ batteries can be discharged deeply without significantly shortening their lifespan. For most portable operators, a 6Ah to 12Ah LiFePO₄ battery offers an excellent balance of weight and operating time, making it ideal for POTA, field operations, and emergency communications.

Lithium-Ion batteries are even lighter and have a slightly higher energy density than LiFePO₄ packs. They are commonly found in laptops and power tools. While they can power portable HF equipment effectively, they require careful charging and protection from over-discharge. Their nominal voltage is slightly lower than a LiFePO₄ battery, and they generally have a shorter service life. Although perfectly suitable for many applications, they are less common among amateur radio operators than LiFePO₄ batteries.

Sealed Lead Acid (SLA) batteries have powered portable radios for decades. They are inexpensive, readily available, and relatively rugged. However, they are also the heaviest option. A battery that provides several hours of operating time may weigh two to three times as much as an equivalent LiFePO₄ pack. In addition, SLA batteries should not be discharged below about 50 percent of their capacity if you want to maximize their lifespan, reducing the amount of usable energy available in the field.

For most operators, the decision comes down to balancing cost and portability. While an SLA battery may have the lowest purchase price, its added weight can quickly become a disadvantage during a hike or long POTA activation. Lithium-Ion batteries save weight but require more attention to charging and protection. LiFePO₄ batteries cost more initially, but their long life, stable voltage, safety, and light weight often make them the best overall value.

If you're assembling a new portable HF station today, it's difficult to argue against a quality LiFePO₄ battery. The higher initial investment is usually offset by years of reliable service and a lighter pack that makes every trip to the field a little easier.

Bottom Line: For most amateur radio portable operators, LiFePO₄ offers the best combination of weight, safety, operating time, and long-term value, making it the battery of choice for today's portable HF adventures.

73 and good operating!

Mike KN4XP

Emergency Management

August is Emergency Management Awareness Month

When most people hear "Emergency Management," they often picture hurricane forecasts, Emergency Operations Centers buzzing with activity, or crews responding after a disaster.

While those moments are certainly part of the mission, they represent only a small portion of what Emergency Management does throughout the year.

Emergency Management is built on four phases, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery, with much of the work taking place long before an emergency ever occurs. Planning, training, exercises, public education, grant management, partner coordination, and maintaining communication capabilities all help ensure our community is ready when disasters strike. That is where partnerships like CFARS make a tremendous difference.

Reliable, redundant communications remain one of the cornerstones of emergency response. Whether supporting emergency operations, assisting with damage assessments, relaying critical information, or providing communications when traditional systems are disrupted, amateur radio operators continue to demonstrate the value of volunteer service and technical expertise.

Emergency Management Awareness Month also serves as a reminder that preparedness is a shared responsibility. Strong emergency management programs are built through collaboration between government agencies, first responders, nonprofit organizations, private industry, and dedicated volunteers like those within CFARS.

On behalf of Cumberland County Emergency Management, thank you for the time, knowledge, and commitment you bring to strengthening our community's resilience. Your willingness to train, volunteer, and serve helps ensure we are better prepared, not just for the next storm, but for whatever challenge comes our way.

Preparedness isn't something we achieve overnight. It's something we build together, one partnership, one exercise, and one connection at a time.

Amanda Scheck
Emergency Management Coordinator

Field Day 2026



Field Day 2026



Field Day 2026



26th Annual

CFARS SwapFest

Sponsored by the Cape Fear Amateur Radio Society

www.cfarsnc.org

Fayetteville, North Carolina

Saturday August 8, 2026

8:00am to 12:00 noon

**Cumberland County Shrine Club
7040 Ramsey St (US Hwy 401 N)**

No Admission!! No Fee for Tables!!!

**Please help us keep this event free
by placing a monetary contribution in
the donation box so we can cover the rent
on the building!!!**

Talk-in: K4MN Repeater 146.910 (-) CTCSS 100Hz

Information and Table Reservations:

David KI4W davidki4w@gmail.com

910-624-1394

VE Test Session Walk-ins Only Registration 9:00am Testing 9:30am

ARRL VE Testing: Jim K4BUC jbuccieri@twc.com

910-309-5218

Set-up begins at 6:30am. Only vendors inside before 8:00am. If you need tables please call or email in advance. On the morning of the Swapfest see David KI4W for tables.

Table Reservations recommended.

Tail Gating available - - also FREE!!!

An ARRL Sanctioned Event