



KYARCS Newsletter

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 2

JUNE 2024

Club Meetings

For everyone that reads this newsletter, I would like to invite you to our club meetings. We meet at the Mayo Methodist Church at 325 Third Street in Paintsville, KY. The meetings start at 7:00 pm and are held on the first Thursday on every month. The doors are open at 6:00 pm for anyone wishing to take a licensing exam and/or just want to talk to other hams that are there.



This are the attendees of the May meeting. Ken Robinson, Frank Wells, Andrew Coleman, Richard Salisbury, David Heintzeman, John Hager, Ron Grossl, Virgil Ferguson, Robert Hayes, James Morley, Jerry Clemons, Donna Moore, Paul Combs, Bill Hamm, and Savannah Gillispie.

Don't let the pictures scare you off, we're actually a good bunch of people and will try to help in any way we can.

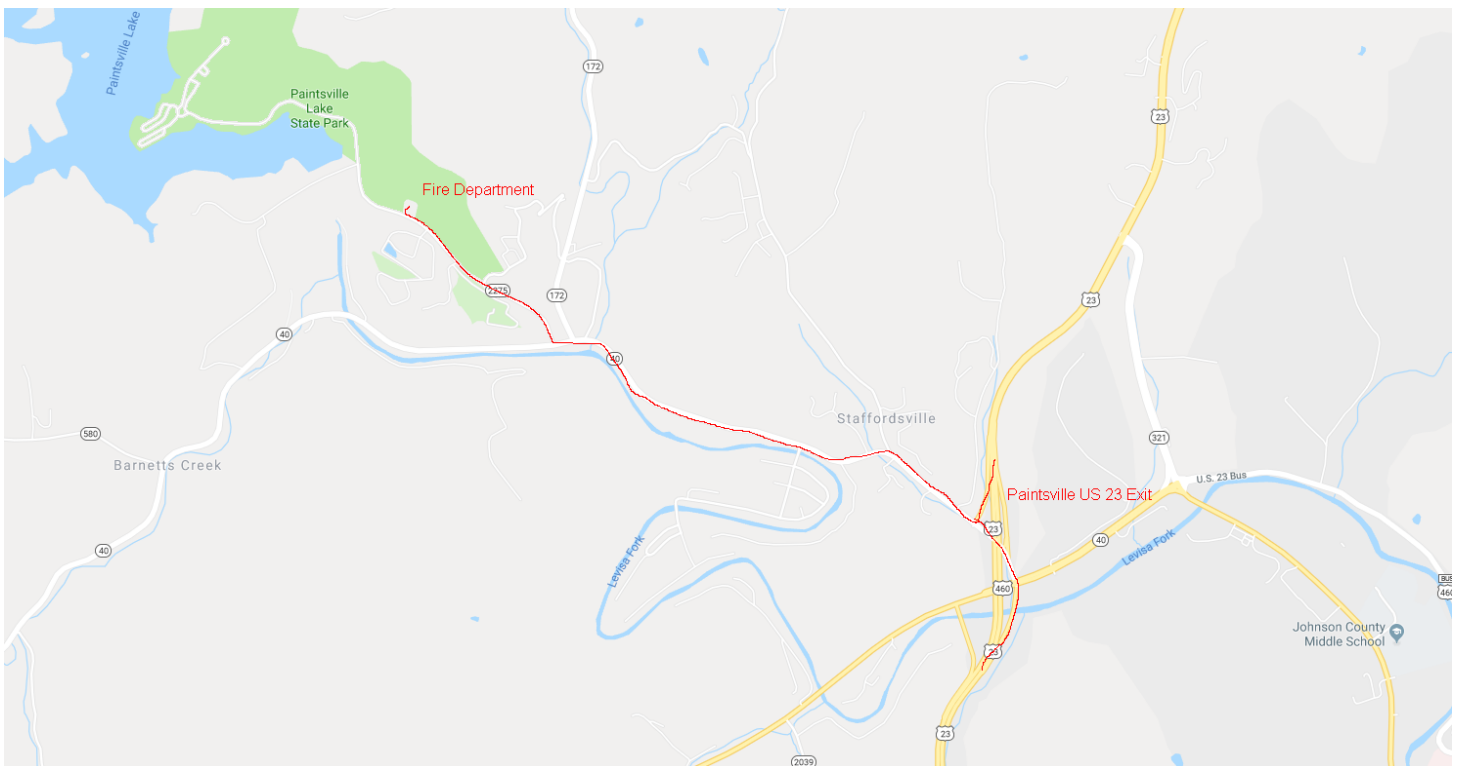
Field Day 2024

The 2024 ARRL Field Day is coming soon ! Its June 22nd and 23rd to be concise. Our club plans on setting up and operating as usual. We will operate from the Oil Springs Fire Station #2, near Paintsville Lake State Park. It is located near the top of the hill after you turn off Route 40 on to the lake road (Route 2275). Its on the right and sets back in a clearing. Anyone that is interested is welcome to attend. We usually start setting up around 10:00 am on Saturday morning, with actual operations starting at 2:00 pm. There will be food and drinks served Saturday afternoon or evening.



So if you would like to operate or just see what it is we're doing, please stop in. And if you can't make it to our site, get on the air and make some contacts from home. Be sure to listen for KY4ARC, as we need all the contacts we can get.

Here is a map of the site that shows in red, the path from Route 23.



Club POTA Event

On April 20, 2024, members of our club met for a POTA (Parks on the Air), activation. We had decided to activate Paintsville Lake State Park. So at 9:00AM, Frank Wells was at the park to make sure we got the picnic shelter we wanted. Some time later, others started arriving to set up antennas and their radio equipment. To their surprise,



there was no electricity available at the shelter and after checking with park officials, they found out that there was a fee for turning on the

Jerry Clemons, Donna Moore, Cam Price, Paul Combs with John Hager and Rich Salisbury way back there.

power. Of course, hams are widely known for being able to operate in remote circumstances under less than ideal conditions. There were some of the group that had brought batteries and that saved the day. There was enough batteries to set up two hf stations running 100 watts and one QRP station running 5 watts. Also, Paul Combs set up a vhf repeater for local communications. The equipment we used was a Yaesu FT-891 with a 40 meter dipole mounted on a flag pole; a Yaesu FT-991 with a multiband vertical; and an Icom IC-705 with an endfed halfwave antenna.

One of the reasons we did this club activation was to show anyone that hadn't worked POTA, just how it works. So Donna Moore, took things in hand and demonstrated everything that needs to be logged and just how to make contacts. She then helped four others make their contacts while helping them log. She also demonstrated how this all worked to Tom Castle, a long time ham, and got him interested in doing some parks. One of the guys that made some contacts was Jerry Clemons. He is not a ham yet, but is very interested and with Donna's help as the control operator, made 32 contacts. She also helped three other hams log some contacts as well. The breakdown of contacts, as far as I know, is as follows:

Donna Moore K8AEP - 59 SSB contacts

Jerry Clemons - 32 SSB contacts

James Morley KQ4PVH - 32 SSB Contacts

Cam Price KQ4KBE – 12 SSB Contacts

Bill Hamm KN4EME - 2 SSB Contacts

John Hager N4KJU – 10 SSB Contacts (Not sure about this total)

(continued next page...)

The club certainly made enough contacts to activate the park and we are happy with the results. We all learned something from the experience and know a few things to prepare in the event that we have another park activation. First off, make sure we have batteries for all the stations we wish to operate, and also make sure we have bandpass filters for each of the stations operating. We did have some trouble with one radio bleeding over on others. Of course the close proximity of the antennas didn't help this situation. Lesson learned.

Following is a list of all that were at the event:

Frank Wells – KY4FW	James Morley – KQ4PVH
Paul Combs – AK4U	Bill Hamm – KN4EME
Donna Moore – K8AEP	Tom Castle – KA4KSV
Rich Salisbury – KO4BVP	Jerry Clemons
John Hager – N4KJU	Tim Watkins
Cam Price – KQ4KBE	Ron Grossl – NT4W



**Frank Wells, Rich Salisbury, John Hager, and James Morley
Standing by at the park and waiting for others to arrive.**



Some antenna work by James Morley, Paul Combs and Jerry Clemons

Donna Moore tutoring Jerry Clemons in the find art of POTA, with Cam Price standing by awaiting his turn. Jerry is not a ham yet, but with Donna as the control operator, was able to make 32 contacts.



Tom Castle, John Hager(in the background), James Morley, Jerry Clemons and Paul Combs



Cam Price gets his chance.

And so does James Morley



One of the operating positions starting to take shape. This shows that you don't have to have a lot of equipment to work POTA.

Eastern Kentucky Linked Repeater System

As most of the hams that see this newsletter know, there is a network of repeaters in East Kentucky that are linked together. If you can communicate with one of the repeaters, you can talk to anyone on any of the repeaters in the system. Since this part of Kentucky is covered with many hills, there is a problem for a single repeater to cover all of the nooks and crannies in a given coverage area. The linked system enables many more hams to get into a repeater and have a good probability of someone coming back to them. The linked system was the idea of Ken Robinson - K4KBR -. He wanted to create a more reliable communications system that would be better in cases of emergency. He recruited Curtis Meade -KY4CM-, (now a silent key), and off they went testing and getting the repeaters linked and working. They were able to add quite a few repeaters over the years and have added the ability to announce weather watches and warning over the system, plus any of the linked repeaters can be disconnected from the link if need be.

There are several of our local hams that need to be thanked for all they have done to keep this linked system alive and growing. Of course Ken and Curt for the very foundation of the system should be appreciated. An Fred Jones - WA4SWF-, has his own repeater linked into the system and has been able to acquire several pieces of gear, such as antennas and controllers from state agencies to use on some of the repeaters. Seems as though Fred knows everyone in Frankfort and can talk them into donating needed items. Of course, a repeater system never works without some kinks and this system is no different. So, someone that knows something about repeaters has to keep the repeaters going. Thankfully, we have a group of hams that work on the various repeaters. Ken Robinson -K4KBR-, Ross Leedy – KJ4GRJ-, Paul Combs -AK4U-, and TJ Hoover -KV4AJ- are the guys that do most of the repeater work. There are others that may help, but these are the ones that do most of the work on the actual gear. We all like to complain about a repeater problem, but this group actually goes out and does something about it. All who use the repeaters or just listen to one owe them a big thank you. We're lucky to have a group like them.

Another, we should thank and recognize, is Frank Wells -KY4FW-. While he doesn't go out to work on the repeaters, he does bring in quite a bit of traffic to the system. Frank runs the nightly Friendship Net on the linked system. Every night of the year, this net meets at 10:00 pm and has quite a few check-ins. If something happens Frank can't make it, he makes arrangements for Bill Hamm -KN4EME- or Rich Salisbury -KO4BVP- to take over net control duties. The net had almost 8000 check-ins last year and is on course to do that much or more this year. The net has grown tremendously since Frank took over duties as net control. I serves several purposes, as well as being a meeting ground for all that check in. It allows hams to check their equipment to make sure it is in good working order and to keep it from sitting idle. It also serves as a training ground for the newer hams in the area. I'm sure many new hams have made their first contact on the net. And the net also serves as a place to make announcements to the local ham community. So, thanks go to Frank, Bill and Rich.

Here is a list of the repeaters in the linked system:

PIKEVILLE	145.150	PL 127.3	CALL = K4PDM
INEZ	145.270	PL 127.3	CALL = N4KJU
PRESTONSBURG	145.310	PL 127.3	CALL = KY4ARC
MARTIN	145.190	PL 127.3	CALL = AK4U
SALYERSVILLE	146.625	PL 127.3	CALL = KY4ARC
DORTON	147.045	PL 127.3	CALL = AK4U
PAINTSVILLE	147.225	PL 127.3	CALL = KY4ARC
LOUISA	147.390	PL 127.3	CALL = WA4SWF

Take a look at a few pictures that I have of recent repeater maintenance and installations.



This is a drone's view of the Flatwoods repeater site at Dorton. You can see why it has great coverage.



Here a couple of pictures of the new Martin repeater site. We can all thank TJ Hoover for purchasing the repeater and Paul Combs for installing it.



And finally, this is a picture of Paul Combs during a recent trip to the Martin repeater to fix some issues. Sorry, I don't have any pictures of any of the others that work on the repeaters. And again, thanks to all that make this linked system possible.

This Spring's Weird Radio Propagation

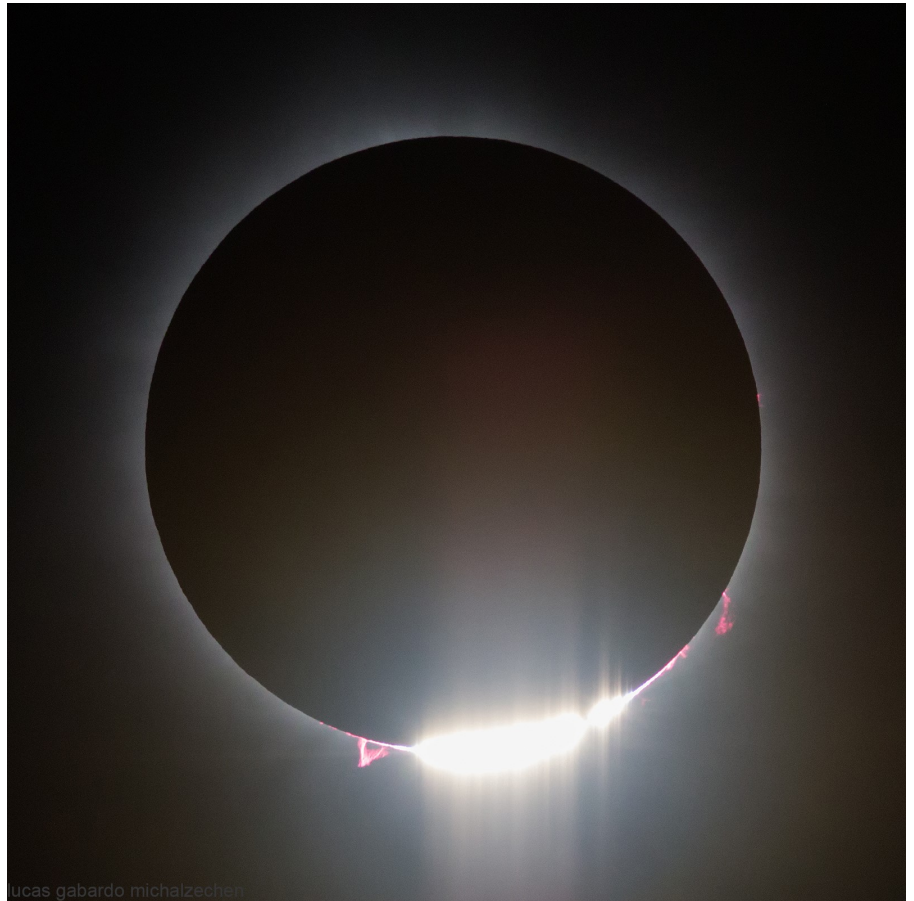
For many of us, we got to see two uncommon events this spring. The total or near total solar eclipse and the aurora borealis were both fascinating events. I had the pleasure of flying with my son to Indiana to see the eclipse in totality. It was certainly worth the trip. And I saw the aurora out my back door. We all know that the eclipse is caused by the moon's passing in front of the sun. The Aurora Borealis results from charged particles (mainly electrons and protons) colliding with the Earth's upper atmosphere. These particles are accelerated by the solar wind, which originates from the Sun. When they collide with atmospheric gases, they emit beautiful colors, creating the mesmerizing auroras. Both events are a real treat to see, but what effect do they have on radio propagation?



Well, the eclipse did cause some unusual propagation, but it was short lived. Since I was in Indiana, without a radio, I didn't notice any change at all. But some hams did. I saw a video of some hams in Texas that started hearing commercial AM broadcasts that much farther away than they could usually hear in the daylight hours. And I found reports that 80 meters produced some more distant contacts. The effect that the aurora, or more accurately, the cause of the aurora was much more noticeable and longer lasting. The charged particles that cause the aurora also altered the ionospheric layers. This can and did cause disruptions and blocking effects on radio communication. The particles can cause absorption of radio waves instead of the usual reflection that we normally use to communicate via so called skip. This certainly happened at my location. I could not hear any signals at all for some time and some very weak signals for a few days. When I did start hearing signals, they were distorted and the CW signals sounded like that were sent through water or some weird guitar pedal. On the other hand, the phenomenon can cause tropospheric ducting. This can enhance vhf and uhf communications. I didn't personally experience any of this, though I saw on the internet where some areas were able to work some dx on 6 meters. Anyway, We did get to see a pretty light show in the sky.



This picture and the one at the beginning of the article was taken in Shelbyville, IN, where we flew to to see the total eclipse.

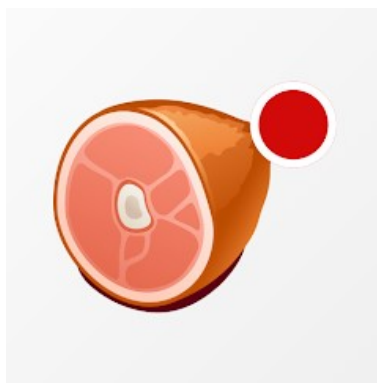


This pictures was taken at my son's house in Georgetown, KY.

Do You Have A Roku ?

If you use a Roku or a smart TV that has one built in, you may find this useful. This was brought to my attention by our club secretary, Virgil Ferguson. Roku now has an Amateur Radio app. Its called Amateur Radio Today. To find it, just use the search function on the Roku Home Screen and search for "amateur radio". Then add the app to your Roku. There are number of programs available to watch or listen to. A few are on for a limited amount of time, byt there others that are podcasts and other informative shows. Ham Nation contains a lot of useful shows, including some shows that are training for license exams. Also Amateur Radio News are audio only shows and a few shows are mini documentaries on DXpeditions. If you're into ham radio, your sure to find something of interest.

App for DXers and Certificate Chasers



Virgil also pointed me to a nifty app for the smart phone. Its called Ham Alert and is available for both the iPhone and Android platforms. Its purpose is to notify you when a particular type of station is on the air and where they are operating. You set up triggers to tell it what you are looking for and it scours the spotting site, PSK Reporter, Reverse Beacon Network and other sources to find you choices. You can setup to look for invidual station call signs, unworked states, countires, modes or just about anything you can think of. You can combine triggers to really narrow down what you want to be notified about. For instance if you want to look for a cw station form either Japan or Thailand operating on 17 meters or 12 meters, it can do that. When it finds what you are looking for, it can notify you in several different ways. It can send an audible alarm on your phone, send a text, and other methods of notifying you. It's a very sophisticate app and is free on Apple App Store, Google Play and on your PC. Its well worth the time to try it out.

Focus on Websites



A couple more websites that may be of interest to some of you.



<http://rx.linkfanel.net/>

I had presented a site somewhat like this one in a previous issue. It is a site for finding and listening to SDR radios all over the world. These radios operate on many different bands, which are selectable on their interfaces. You can just listen to a ham band from the point of “view” of a ham in India for instance. Most are just in the HF bands, but some extend into VHF. You can listen to frequencies outside the ham bands on many of them also. Some have other facilities such as FT8 decoder, CW decoders, SSTV receivers and a host of other extensions. You can also record the audio you hear from most of these receivers. This can be a big help to see what your station sounds like. Just select a station that you have propagation to on the band you are operating on. Tune you station in and press the record button on the SDR page. It is not readily apparent which button selects record (at least to me). It is the circular red arrow beside the green speaker icon. When you click it again, it turns off recording and downloads the file to your usual download location. The site is set up as a world map with a lot of pins dropped on it. You can zoom into the map and select a pin in a desired location. This brings up a small description of the select receiver. Just click the description to take you to the SDR site. It may take a while to understand what everything is, but its well worth it and is a lot of fun to discover just what it can do.

<http://tiny.cc/arqsg>

This is a site that was sent to me by Fred Jones. It is a slide show that K8ZT put together. It is geared toward people who want to become a ham and newer hams that are already licensed, but would like some insights into what to do next. It contains many links for different aspects of the hobby and can be a source for new hams to learn what is available and how to get started in different ham activities. Don't just scroll through the first few slides, keep going and you will find all sorts of things you might want to learn.

Also, for any ham, you might want to take a look at his full website.

www.k8zt.com

It contains all sorts of information on ham radio and other maker stuff, and even a little on cooking and trains.

Its definitely worth a look.



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Club Chaplin — Dave Heinzelman N4DLH

Feel free to contact any one of them if you have questions pertaining to the club.

You can also go to our website at:

www.ky4arc.com

We meet every month on the first Thursday of the month at Mayo Methodist Church in Paintsville. Meeting time is 7:00 pm with testing and socialization starting at 6:00 pm. Everyone is welcome to attend.

