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# Kay County Hams Newsletter

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Kay County,OK

August 21, 2025 <sup>here."</sup>

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## Digital Mode FT8 Presentation

By: Phil Maxson KI5PC

My very early days as a new Ham operator went by a very fast pace for a 75 year old, retired engineer. I was in a rush to DO. In the first six months, I went from studying (memorize in my case) questions and answers for the Tech exam, the General exam, and the Extra exam. I purchased and set up my station, an IC-7300, a Kenwood dual band radio, a dual band antenna and a fan dipole multi-band commercial antenna. I made a few SSB contacts, but I found I was a little hesitant on SSB. Having invested the time and effort to get that far and not wanting to waste my progress, I looked around to other methods to play radio without talking into a mic. The Digital modes seemed like a good area, So, I dove into learning FT8. It is a mode which communicates deep within the normal background noise of SSB. I also did not have to speak into a mic.

At the time, my shack consisted of my Windows 10 laptop, my IC-7300, and dipole antenna running for the area of my garage roof to a tree. I was cruising along with 1400+ contacts (~1,000 FT8 and 400+ SSB contacts mostly chasing POTA operators)

when I made a very big mistake in May of 2025, testing my attempted DIY "Poor man's POTA Performer" vertical antenna.

This presentation focuses on my recovery from the critical error, which fried my Windows 10 laptop, causing me to relearn my logging program, ACLogger, my rig control program, WSJT-X, and my visual toy, Grid Tracker.

In the process of my station rehab, I will share my adventure to deal with new versions of my old programs trying to get back to where I was before May. I plan to share my lessons learned during this presentation.

**Be Sure to attend the upcoming meeting on 8/21/2025 for this presentation.**

# Notes from the President

I hope that all of you have been inside enjoying amateur radio. I hope like you that you are looking forward to September with cooler temperatures. Speaking of September, the KCARC has a major activity for this month. The theme of 2025 for our annual W5R activity is "Remember the Cattle Drives". While the activity will be explained in more detail at the meeting by Phil (KI5PC), I will give you a brief idea of what is planned for this year. We hope to see you participate from September 8 - 22.

Members of the club can sign up to operate as W5R and operate from home or at a location in and around Kay County. You even have the option of activating one of the POTA parks in the area. Just know that you need to use W5R as your call sign and keep a log of your contacts.

Additionally, the club will have a POTA activation at the Pioneer Woman Museum/Historical Landmark. This will be on September 13, 2025. Mark your calendars. This is a really exciting time. We will operate as many modes as possible and will need operators to help out. If you have never done an activation and wonder what it is like to be on the receiving end of a pile up then this is your opportunity. Darrel (KJ5LY) and I have done a couple of activations. At both activations, we use phone as our operating mode and got around 30 contacts in 30 minutes. So if we want to use FT8, CW as well as phone, you can see we will need operators and loggers for this. It is a great time for all.

A final addition to your calendar; the Enid Hamfest is September 20. This is a very good hamfest that is nearby.

OK, don't forget the meeting on August 21. See you there!

73,  
John – N9JYJ

Keep yourself Ready for anything





# News from The ARRL and other ham outlets

## Ham Radio Responds During Tsunami Threat

**ARRL Letter 7/30/2025**

Amateur radio operators, including volunteers serving in the

ARRL® [Amateur Radio Emergency Service®](#) (ARES®) were active in monitoring the potential impacts of tsunami waves following an earthquake off the Russian coast on July 29, 2025. The quake registered 8.8 on the Richter scale, and prompted tsunami concerns and warnings around the Pacific rim.

ARRL Pacific Section Manager Alan Maenchen, AD6E, lives in Wailuku, Hawaii. He was monitoring ham radio communications across the state. “There was some minor flooding in a few areas. It could have been worse. Some of the early waves were measured at 4.5 feet. Waves continue this morning but at a much lower level and difficult to notice by the naked eye,” he reported.

The well-networked ham radio operators in Hawaii quickly sprang into action following the alerts. Informal VHF nets were held on amateur radio repeaters. “Rick (Ward), WH6FC, held an informational statewide HF net on 7090 kHz LSB for many hours and there were about 57 check-ins,” said Maenchen.

On the US mainland, radio amateurs were also on alert. “The Oregon coast teams appear to have been in informal monitoring mode so that they are readily available for activation if needed,” said Bonnie Altus, AB7ZQ, who serves as the Section Emergency Coordinator of the ARRL Oregon Section.

The California Rescue Net on 40 meters was activated. According to Bob Turner, W6RHK, Section Manager of the ARRL Orange Section, “The net received some preparation reports from the San Francisco Bay area and Santa Cruz along with some maritime mobile stations with routine traffic. Orange County RACES checked into the net to inquire about tsunami traffic.”

Ham radio operators are trained for situations like this. In March, operators in the ARRL Los Angeles Section [participated in a Tsunami exercise](#), simulating their response following large earthquakes with magnitudes 6 through 9 that appeared over several hours – much like this real world instance. Across the Caribbean, ARRL volunteers took part in the [Caribe Wave 2025 drill](#) the same month.

As mainstream media was covering the earthquake and potential tsunami, Nexstar Media, the largest ownership group of television stations in the United States, published an article across its stations’ websites with

[10 tips for evacuating during a tsunami](#). Number 6 on the list was to “Bring a portable radio or ham radio, also known as an amateur radio. Do not count on phones or the internet to work. Stay tuned until the threat is over.”

The tsunami impact to North America was minimal at worst, and alerts were canceled by midday on July 30. Photographs from Russia show widespread devastation from the earthquake.

The 40-meter amateur radio band is a popular choice for regional emergency communications nets due to the ability to use near vertical incidence skywave (NVIS) propagation, in which the radio waves go nearly straight up and are reflected over a limited area by the ionosphere. Many hams involved in emergency communications use NVIS antennas in their home setups.

### Future Newsletter Items?

I am always looking for future articles or ideas for any columns for future newsletters. If you have any ideas for a future things to be featured in this newsletter such as:

- Future Column Ideas
- Items in your Ham Shack that need to go to make space for new gear
- Articles focusing on events around the country that aren't being covered or aren't being covered enough
- Items in ham news including but not limited to FCC rules and regulation changes, frequencies that are hot vs not in terms of DX contacts.

For anything involved in the hobby or articles/columns you would like to see. Please email them to me

<mailto:kaycountyhamsnewsletter@outlook.com>

# Handwritten notes, HAM radio help rescue mother, son lost in California forest

Source: [Ham Radio California Forest](#)

A 49-year-old woman and her 9-year-old son who found themselves stranded deep in the dense Stanislaus National Forest late last week left a trail of handwritten notes that helped their rescuers locate them, officials announced this week.

On July 11, the pair traveled from the Sacramento area to Camp Wolfeboro for an overnight camping trip, officials with the Calaveras County Sheriff's Office said in a [news release](#).

During their excursion, the 49-year-old was using a GPS unit that offered alternate routes to their destination along with more common ones. When the GPS unit lost its signal, the mother and son were already well inside a remote area of the forest and were unable to retrace their route back out.

Rescue efforts unfolded on July 12 after a person reported that the woman and her son had not returned or called as expected.

"A deputy was dispatched to initiate a missing persons investigation, and the search and rescue team was deployed to begin search efforts," officials said. "The reporting party also provided a location obtained from a location-sharing app they previously used with the missing persons."

A command post was established in a recreational area off Highway 4 where team members began "assessing the terrain and the complex network of interconnecting, labyrinth-like roads" to establish search parameters.

During the early part of the rescue effort, a Forest Service Law Enforcement Ranger responded to a 911 text from a camper around Black Springs and Winton roads who said they'd seen a vehicle matching the missing persons report at around 4 p.m. the previous day.

"This information, along with data provided by the reporting party, confirmed that the teams were searching in the correct area," officials said.

While stranded with no GPS or cellphone signal, deputies said the pair took actions to increase the likelihood of being rescued, including using the vehicle's hazard lights at night. The 9-year-old also utilized an international signal for help by periodically using his whistle in three short bursts.

A search and rescue team spotted the first note at around 5:40 p.m. at the intersection of a forest service road.

"Help. Me and my son are stranded with no service and can't call 911," the note read. "We are ahead, up the road to the right. Please call 911 and get help for us."

The mother and son were found about another mile from the second note.

Because of the dense forest and canopy in the remote location, the rescue team was unable to communicate with the command post that the pair had safely been found.

"They utilized an amateur radio frequency, commonly known as HAM radio, to establish communication," officials said. "After broadcasting 'emergency traffic' on the HAM radio, their call was immediately answered by a retired El Dorado County Communications Supervisor who was a HAM operator monitoring frequencies from his home. This HAM operator then contacted the El Dorado 911 center, which provided the information to Calaveras Dispatch, and the SAR command post was notified."

The search and rescue crew assisted the mother and her son in driving back to the command post where their family was waiting for them.